San Francisco Artists Series

Ruth Cravath

Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli Cravath

TWO SAN FRANCISCO ARTISTS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES, 1920-1975

With an Introduction by
John S. Bolles

An Interview Conducted by
Ruth Teiser
Catherine Harroun

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INTRODUCTION

I don't know now if I first met Ruth Cravath in the turmoil at Treasure Island in 1938, but I can remember the wonderful discussions that I had with her there at noontimes at Grison's, the only restaurant on the island with the foresight to open before the Fair to satisfy the appetites of the hundreds of artists, architects, contractors and purveyors working there.

I had just returned from my many years away from San Francisco, and, working in my father's architectural office, I had two commissions on Treasure Island, and worked for the "California Commission for the Golden Gate International Exposition". I was new on the scene and swept up in the spirit of working with the artists and architects, and knew Ruth as one of the young women artists dedicated to the concepts of Ralph Stackpole.

A few years later my sons Peter and David were enrolled in the Saturday classes at the San Francisco Art Institute with painting under Bill Gaw and sculpture under Ruth Cravath. Today in Peter's garden in Kentfield is the four foot long seal cast in concrete - and "strangely" looking like something done by Ruth Cravath. At home we have some delightful small ceramic sculptures by David.

In the mid-forties there were not many art classes for children, and I insisted upon ours having such an opportunity. Most classes were composed of beginners and children. Ruth gave classes in her studio as well as those at the Art Institute. Mary shared with me the transportation job from Marin County and then got to know Ruth and joined her studio classes. From then on I was gradually drawn into the life of the Institute, and eventually became the chairman of the board for three years. What a board I had! The women artists were ably and vocally represented at varying times by Nell Sinton, Ruth Armer, Glo Kirby and Ruth Cravath.

I saw many of Ruth's bas-reliefs of children and asked her to do one of Mary. Finally the ceramic head appeared. This is one of Ruth's finest creations, possibly because of the fluidity of the clay which permitted her to rapidly and firmly set down her impressions.

We had had portraits painted by Moya del Pino of all but Tom, and so decided to again ask Ruth to do a head of him, which she executed in her favorite material, hydrocal. Later she used this as her model for carving Tom Bolles in pink marble, and the hydrocal head was cast into bronze.
With the acquisition of the cemetery at Timber Cove I was struck with the old concept of having tombstones carved. Now Mary and Ruth are at work on these, with Ruth doing the two bas-relief heads and Mary carving the festoons.

When the Archbishop Hanna Center in Sonoma County was assigned to Ward and Bolles, and Ciampi, I insisted on original art for the chapels. I was able to persuade Ciampi, as well as the board, to select Ruth Cravath to create "Our Lady of Fatima" on the facade, the marble stations in the main chapel, and the crucifix. Mary Erckenbrach was given the stations for the Sisters Chapel, which she beautifully executed in glazes applied to twelve inch square ceramic floor tiles. Cravath's stations and Crucifix are in themselves worth a trip to Sonoma.

Ruth was not an "ecclesiastical" sculptor but was at ease in working with clients and architects. She immediately caught the spirit of this unusual chapel. The exterior sculpture blends with the building but definitely asserts itself. The stations of the cross strongly carry their message, and the Crucifix is magnificent in its simplicity, set against a stone wall behind one of the most simple and largest altars in the Archdiocese.

Much of the credit for the success of this project must go to Ruth Cravath who charmed everyone with her warm personality and her dedication to her art. Mary in the meantime had the Sisters so enthralled that we were allowed to keep cold beer in their refrigerator!

I have always said that an architect's most difficult consultant is the artist -- probably because I feel that art is a firm part of architecture, and that both have to work together to produce an integrated whole. The architect is always in the position of having to work with his clients and keep the total projects within budget. On the other hand artists have generally worked in a vacuum and time and budget are as vague to them as is the restriction on space and volume.

By the time the IBM Plant at San Jose was in full swing I commissioned Ruth to execute one of the IBM "squares" along with Tolerton, Woods, O'Hanlon, Howard, Monroe, Feldman, Erckenbrach, Marie-Rose, and a host of others. I selected the artists using only those from the Bay Area and in whom I had confidence. The artists were to coordinate their work through Bob Holdeman, whom I put on my staff. We had a number of group meetings to establish basic colors and "scale", and although we achieved a permanent compendium of the Bay Area sculpture of the late fifties, we never had the "fun" of Treasure Island.

Ruth Cravath's "Family of Man" there could have been built from her designs, but she wanted to do it herself in Stackpole's old stoneyard where the Villa Taverna Club now stands. I believed her concept one of the best we had, but she would not trust us to execute the work. Later, she gave in on the St. Francis at Candlestick Park. I think that she finally realized the magnitude of the job, and Dorothy Cravath and others helped convince her that the plain concrete forms were in keeping with the monumental concrete architecture of the stadium. As it stands, Cravath's St. Francis is one of the Bay Area's finest works of art.
I continue my efforts to convince owners to allow me to incorporate art in their plans, and surely there will be more Hanna Centers, IBMs, and Candlestick Parks for Ruth to do. She has ably carried on the San Francisco tradition in sculpture as set by her mentor, Ralph Stackpole. What Olivera, Diebenkorn, Parks and Bischoff, to name a few, have done to bring the Bay Area to the forefront in American painting; Howard, O'Hanlon, Gurdon Woods and Ruth Cravath are doing for Bay Area sculpture.

John S. Bolles
Architect

1976
San Francisco
INTERVIEW HISTORY

The interview with Ruth Cravath was conducted in nine sessions, as indicated in the table of contents, between January 21 and March 6, 1975. The location of the first was the small studio building off Miss Cravath's Potrero Hill stoneyard, the rest in her second-story apartment in her house on the same grounds. The first eight were devoted to Miss Cravath's own career, and the arts in San Francisco as perceived by her since the 1920's. The last of the interviews related principally to her late friend and sister-in-law, Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli Cravath, whose interview she had previously read.

The interview with Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli Cravath was held on March 20 and 22, 1974 at her home at 2152 Ward Street, Berkeley, in the dining room that was used as a sitting room. The interviewers and the interviewee sat around the table, while Mrs. Cravath's dog roamed about the room and occasionally barked. The interview was done on a voluntary basis, in advance of any plan to transcribe it. And it is incomplete, for soon after the second session Mrs. Cravath became too ill to continue. The transcript, made after her death, was checked by Ruth Cravath at the same time that she checked her own transcript. Few changes were made in either, but there were a number of brief additions made at the request of the interviewers.

The interviewers have been friends of both interviewees for many years, and, as is evident in the interviews, admirers of them as women and as artists.

Funds for this volume were contributed by an anonymous donor and by Mrs. Helen Salz.

Ruth Teiser
Catherine Harrown
Interviewer-Editors

September 1977
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EARLY LIFE
(Interview 1, January 21, 1975. Place: Ruth Cravath's garden studio on Potrero Hill in San Francisco.)

Teiser: We sent you an outline covering the early years of your life, with suggested subjects for discussion. Let me start by asking you when and where you were born.

Cravath: Very good. Well, I was born in Beverly Hills, a suburb of Chicago, on January 23, 1902.

Teiser: And your father's name?

Cravath: His name was James Raley Cravath and he was an illuminating engineer.

Teiser: And your mother?

Cravath: My mother was Myra Rew. Then I had one older brother, Austin Melville, who was named for his two grandparents.

Teiser: Were your parents midwesterners, Ruth?

Cravath: Yes. My mother was born in Illinois and my father in Iowa—in Grinnell, Iowa, as a matter of fact, where he and my mother met, where they went to college,* and where subsequently I was sent for one year to college, my first year after graduating from high school and going to the Art Institute one year.

Teiser: Did you live throughout your childhood in that same Chicago suburb?

Cravath: Yes, we lived in Beverly Hills. As a matter of fact, my parents

*Both parents graduated from Grinnell. R.C.
Cravath: built a house about a block from where I was born, into which we moved when I was six months old. So I lived in Chicago until I--well, I'd graduated from high school and I'd gone through the lower school at the Art Institute when I went to Grinnell for one year, and then that following year when I was still in Grinnell the family moved to Berkeley.

Teiser: Let's move a little more slowly up to this.

Cravath: Okay. [Laughter] Oh, I see. I'm giving it to you in capsule form!

Teiser: [Laughter] We want to go step by step. Was there anything remarkable about your early childhood and your grammar school days?

Cravath: I suppose the remarkable thing is that I decided I wanted to be a sculptor when I was in grammar school.

Teiser: That early!

Cravath: Yes. I think I was in the fifth grade. I had a rather remarkable teacher, really, who was very appreciative of crafts and things like that, and we had clay. I made pottery to start with, I remember, in her class. Of course, I remember to this day a remark she made when she was admiring one of my things. She said, "I'd give my two hands if I could do anything like that!" [Laughter] She was rather an extreme lady, but it warmed my heart nevertheless. So that's how I first got started in clay, working in clay, in the fifth grade.

I think I was still in grammar school when I made a small bust. It was a bust of a woman in clay and when it was finished--oh, I finished it very carefully with sandpaper and everything--my parents said, "Why, it looks like Susan B. Anthony!" So the family called it "Susan B. Anthony" and my grandparents had it in their parlour under one of those glass domes--you remember?--for many years. As a matter of fact, I still have Susan B. Anthony and I have been thinking I should get someone to fire it maybe. It still exists in clay. I think I should. It's my first piece of sculpture. Don't you?

Teiser: Why, yes! Your family, then, admired your talent, I guess. Your grandparents...

Cravath: Yes, I guess my grandparents did, and my family gave me opportunities. I mean, I went to a Saturday class from the Art
Cravath: Institute when I was still in elementary school.

Teiser: You did?

Cravath: Yes. I mean, one of the teachers from the Art Institute taught a class. Miss van der Poel, as a matter of fact. She was a sister of John van der Poel, who wrote the book on figure drawing which you may have seen.

Teiser: She came there?

Cravath: She came out to Beverly Hills. It was a suburb and she had a Saturday class of children. That was probably my first professional training, I mean from a professional artist.

Teiser: Your father and mother thought well of this?

Cravath: Well, I think they thought they should give their child opportunities, shall we say.

Teiser: Did you declare your intention to be a sculptor?

Cravath: [Laughter] I can't remember whether I declared it or not, but it was in my own mind that that's what I wanted to do, yes.

Teiser: Isn't that amazing! You must have been, what, twelve or thirteen?

Cravath: Fifth grade. How old are you in fifth grade?

Teiser: Eleven? Did you have a pleasant time when you were a kid?

Cravath: Yes, I think I did. Yes. We grew up in a suburb where there were fields and wildflowers. It wasn't formal city life, you see.

Teiser: At the same time that you were interested in becoming a sculptor, were you interested in looking at books on or pictures of sculpture?

Cravath: Yes. As a matter of fact, this Miss van der Poel's class that I told you about was not a class in sculpture. I didn't have a chance to study sculpture until after I graduated from high school--I mean formally, at the Art Institute. This was a landscape class. We went out and we worked in colored chalk, you see. So I was doing some drawing all that time, as children normally do.
Teiser: Did you have access to books on art?

Cravath: Yes, I did. I can't remember what they were now. On the first floor of our house was what we called the library and it was all books, and I used to spend a lot of time in there—and a great, big, roll-top desk, one of those huge old-fashioned things. I loved that room, that library. That's where the Christmas tree used to be too because the doors would close, you see, and they could open it Christmas morning.

Teiser: Was the library a reflection of your father's interests, or of both your father's and mother's?

Cravath: Both my parents', yes.

Teiser: And Chick* was studious too—your brother?

Cravath: Oh, yes. He was the brains in the family. [Laughter]

Harroun: You said he was older than you?

Cravath: He was a year and a half older than I was, yes. Didn't you know that?

Harroun: I thought you were twins.

Cravath: No, dear. No, no.

Harroun: It's just that you had twins.

Cravath: Just that I had twins. The only other twins in the family were—my maternal grandmother had twins.

Teiser: You say your grandparents had your figure of Susan B. Anthony?

Cravath: Yes. It's just a little head. It's about this big [gestures]. About four and a half inches.

Teiser: Did you have any particularly close association with your grandparents?

Cravath: Well, they lived in Grinnell, Iowa, so it was an overnight trip on the train. Of course, that was my first experience traveling

*Austin M. Cravath was often called by this nickname.
Cravath: on Pullman trains because my father was always very efficient about not wasting daylight on trains. So we'd always travel at night, because it was a terrible waste of time, you know, and daylight. [Chuckle] So, I used to enjoy those overnight trips to my grandparents and their big, old Victorian house with the tower room where I used to sleep as a child.

Teiser: Did anyone in your family have interest in the arts specifically?

Cravath: Not very much of an interest. However, my paternal grandmother did very beautiful drawing as a young woman (it was, I guess, the thing for a young woman to do), and the family had a few of her drawings. So she probably, you know, had a taste, an inclination, had she had the opportunity to develop it. She graduated from Oberlin College, which was sort of unusual in those days for women, and my maternal grandmother graduated from Mt. Holyoke. So they were all for women being educated. That's why I was sent to Grinnell for one year. Well, we haven't come to Grinnell. Don't let me get ahead on the story! [Laughter]

Teiser: You went from grammar school, then, to high school there in your own community?

Cravath: As a matter of fact, I had to take the train to go to high school. In Beverly Hills, the part I lived in, there was no high school and you had to either go to Parker High School, which was towards the city--it was in Inglewood or someplace--or you had to go to Morgan Park, which had a smaller high school, Morgan Park High School, and that was the one I went to. But we commuted on the train. I think it was a six-minute trip on the Rock Island suburban train, something like that, about six or seven minutes. That was all! [Laughter]

Teiser: Did you like high school?

Cravath: Yes, I did. I liked it.

Teiser: Did it give you a chance to take any more art classes?

Cravath: Well, it's funny how I don't really remember the art classes in high school too much, but I think I probably took what they had. But at that time I was eagerly waiting to graduate from high school and to go to the Art Institute in Chicago.

Teiser: You already had your eye on that?
Cravath: Oh, yes! Of course! That was the greatest art school in the country.

Teiser: And your parents had their eyes on it for you too?

Cravath: Oh, yes. I think so.

Teiser: So, did you have to linger in high school four long years before you got to go to the Art Institute?

Cravath: Well, I wasn't very bright, dear. It took me four long years to graduate from high school. [Laughter]

Teiser: It takes everyone that long, doesn't it?

Cravath: I think so. [Laughter]

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Cravath: I went to summer school one summer while I was still in high school.

Teiser: At the Art Institute?

Cravath: Yes, at the Art Institute.

Teiser: This was the first time you had been?

Cravath: Yes, and I think it was probably between my junior and senior years in high school, if I remember correctly, because I felt very, very grown up. This was a class of adults, you see. It was a summer school class and that was a wonderful six weeks, a marvelous experience for me, and somehow or other it was managed that one of my very dearest friends sat for a portrait for the class, her head. That was fun.

Teiser: How did that happen?

Cravath: I don't know how I achieved that. I guess she wanted the job and maybe Miss Stout, who was our teacher—we had several other models and I can't remember whether it was a six-week or a two-month summer school. But I remember the man model that we did
Cravath: portrait heads of talking about his features; he'd say, "Sharp, not brutal!" [Laughter] Describing, "Sharp, not brutal!" And I remember him and I remember my friend Marion Jaynes, so it may have been that we just had the two for that summer session posing. But, oh, that was a wonderful summer! I just loved it!

Teiser: Did you take a variety of classes or just one?

Cravath: No, I just took the sculpture class, which was five mornings a week. That was the only class I took then. The teacher was a nice young woman. I realize now she was a young woman; probably then I thought she was not young. Miss Ida Stout was her name and she had been in the regular school, you see, in the upper school. She was one of the advanced people. I don't know whether she'd graduated. I don't think Art Institute students "graduated," but she'd completed some course and she was very conscientious and very sweet. I liked her very much.

The regular class at the Art Institute, the sculpture class at that time, was being taught by Alvin Polasik. He was a pretty well known sculptor who did a huge bronze figure that is outside of the Art Institute, I think to this day. At least the last time I was there, it was there. Alvin Polasik was Polish and he was a regular member of the faculty, but Miss Stout took the summer classes the year I was there.

Teiser: That was the first real exposure, then, you had to sculpture?

Cravath: Real exposure to adult sculpture, shall we say, not children's things, yes.

Teiser: Were you amazed, or did you know enough about it to expect what you saw and participate in it?

Cravath: Oh, no. I felt very, very with it. I felt very grown up and very important, I remember.

Teiser: Did you feel able to handle it?

Cravath: Yes, I really did. To be honest, I had no feelings of being timid. I was just excited about it. But I had made little figures at home, you see. I mean, I had done Susan B. Anthony, don't forget! [Laughter]
Teiser: The beginning of your career! [Laughter]

Cravath: Yes! [Laughter]

Teiser: By the time you took this summer course, had you seen enough sculpture to know the kind of sculpture that you were interested in doing?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. They have a very good collection at the Art Institute of Chicago, and I can't remember when I first went there. That was a great thing. My parents used to take us often. Of course, my early trips to the Art Institute of Chicago, I went in and turned directly to the right; the Egyptian Room with the mummies was the most fascinating.

But then there was lots of sculpture besides the Egyptian stuff--I mean, not lots, but enough--and I always looked at sculpture when I saw it in public places.

Teiser: So you were very much aware of what there was?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. Well, I mean, to a limited degree, naturally, but I mean I was interested, shall we say.

Teiser: Your parents had taken you to the museum there when you were quite young, first?

Cravath: Yes. I don't remember when. I mean, I can't remember the first time or when I hadn't seen the Art Institute. I think they must have taken me quite young. It was a part of my early life, you see.

Teiser: Was Chick on those expeditions with you?

Cravath: Oh, yes. May I tell you a story about my brother and me and sculpture? I often think of it when I see strange things and long necks. When we were children, he was carving some wood figures, and he was doing Noah. I may have told you the story of Noah before, but it bears repeating, I think. He did this little wood figure and Noah had sort of a short, stocky body and a perfectly reasonable round head, and the longest neck. I think the neck was as long as his whole body. My brother was a year and a half older than I and an authority and, of course, I thought he knew everything and I looked up to him, and I remember saying, "Well, that neck's too long, Austin." We
Cravath: called him "Austin" then. "No," he said, it wasn't. So I believed him. I thought he was right, but I thought there was something wrong with me because it just looked too long to me, but I had to accept the fact that he said it was all right. It was his firm, authoritative way.

Teiser: [Laughter] When did you find out it wasn't? When did you find out it was too long?

Cravath: [Laughter] I think I was gradually convinced that it was too long!

Teiser: Well, then, your brother also had some interest in the arts.

Cravath: I don't think particularly. I mean, he was always interested in science, you see, and mathematics, particularly science.

Teiser: Did you have any close friends who were?

Cravath: Yes. Oh, yes, I did. There were several of us who were in this Saturday class. Elizabeth Merrill was one of them, and then my very dearest friend, closest friend, who I visited on my way back from Greece last spring, Louise Taylor, who's married to Roger Holmes, a professor of philosophy at Mt. Holyoke. We were neighbors and we sort of grew up together and she subsequently went to the Art Institute and then she was connected with the Boston Museum for a number of years before she married Roger.

Teiser: Were you inclined to make friends more with your contemporaries who were interested in art?

Cravath: I think so. I think that's natural, yes.

Teiser: Most children don't have that strong an interest that early, really, do they?

Cravath: Well, of course, this was early high school and late grammar school. I mean, we weren't very young. Well, yes, we were young, but high school is a bit older.

Teiser: Did you like to have a good time too when you were in high school?

Cravath: Yes, yes.

Teiser: You weren't just a bluestocking? [Laughter] You weren't just an intellectual?
Cravath: Oh, I never was an intellectual! [Laughter] That was the other side! That was my brother!

Teiser: So, you graduated from high school.

Cravath: From Morgan Park High School.

Teiser: And when was that?

Cravath: Let's see. I was born in 1902 and I think I was seventeen when I graduated. So when would that be?

Teiser: Right after the first World War.

Cravath: Oh, yes, after. I remember when the first World War started I was up in Wisconsin. We were having a summer vacation and I just remember very clearly hearing about that. I was then twelve. I must have been. Yes, it was 1914. So that was probably after Susan B. Anthony [laughter] had started my career as a sculptor!

Teiser: So, then, you were in school during the war.

Cravath: Yes, right.

Teiser: Did that have any particular effect on you?

Cravath: No. But I do remember as a younger child--I guess studying history and things--feeling that the world was at peace for good, you know: wars were all over. Somehow or other you were given this impression in school, or it must have been in the atmosphere, that we were too civilized and there weren't going to be any more wars and it was all settled. That was a very peaceful decade, and I remember feeling very guilty because I thought there was going to be no more excitement in the world. I mean, I almost regretted this, you know, because you'd read about wars and it was so exciting. I'd think about that and feel very guilty that I'd had that thought, you see. Well, [laughter] times have changed from then, but it was a very peaceful decade, wasn't it?

Harroun: Oh, yes.

Teiser: Then, by the time you got to art school, the war was over.

Cravath: Yes. Because I went directly after I graduated--I'd had the
one summer at summer school, so that whetted my appetite all the more to go full time after I graduated from high school.

I started that next semester, in September, at the Art Institute in Chicago, and I was not permitted to do any sculpture that first year. They had sort of a discipline. They had a schedule. They had what was called the lower school, the middle school, and the upper school. I was in the lower school and I had to fulfill requirements, so I had life drawing, and still life drawing, and two courses in design—one was geometric and one was figure design, and there were the two different teachers—and lettering even, and I never would have taken those things if I hadn't had to. I've always been glad because from time to time it was a very good course. And there was also some oil painting. I took still life, so I had an opportunity to use different mediums. That was one year and it was a very good course, but sculpture was not in it because the second year you chose what you wanted to do, you see, for the middle school. And that's when, if I had stayed at the Art Institute, I would have been permitted to do sculpture, but I had to go to Grinnell College because my parents were afraid that I would be a narrow, freakish artist. They suddenly got very worried, so they sent me to Grinnell for a year, where they'd gone, you see, so that's why I'm not more of a freak than I am, I guess. [Laughter]

It was during that year that I was at Grinnell that my family moved to Berkeley. They got out here ahead of me.

Let's go back to that year at the Art Institute.

I'm jumping ahead again. I'm very sorry.

Were you a good student at the Art Institute?

I didn't do awfully well, but I was awfully serious. I really worked hard. I can remember some of those design assignments that used to worry me and I'd think about them at night. I probably was average. I think average, maybe.

Did you resent the fact that you couldn't do any sculpture?

Not particularly, I don't believe, because I thought, well, you know--

That you'd get a chance?
Cravath: Yes, I'd get a chance later. I think it made me appreciate the opportunity more. I really do. I think it was a good course that they had figured out. I think a little bit of guidance is rather good, which is lacking in some of the schools nowadays.

GRINNELL COLLEGE AND BERKELEY

Teiser: It wasn't until after the first year that your family decided that you should go to Grinnell College?

Cravath: Well, I think they decided during--oh, I believe there was an agreement that they'd let me go to art school one year and then I'd go to Grinnell for a year. I believe that was agreed before, and then after this I could have gone on to Grinnell if I had chosen, presumably, and graduated, you see. But they wanted me to have the experience, and that was good. I enjoyed that year.

Teiser: What did you study at Grinnell then?

Cravath: There was a course in psychology, which was only supposed to be for sophomores, but they made an exception of me, which was interesting. And an art appreciation course, which, I think, had juniors and seniors in it. Somehow or other I was able to take that. And a very interesting course in Applied Christianity, which Dr. Steiner taught. He had come over from the old country. He was brilliant. He was a Jewish Christian who was a great scholar, and his course in Applied Christianity was very interesting. I took French. I really chose what I wanted, I guess. These are the ones I remember.

At the end of that year I could choose whether to continue going to Grinnell, but I came right out to Berkeley to go to art school, and then they permitted me to study, to be on my own as far as decisions that were made after that.

Teiser: How did your family happen to come to Berkeley?

Cravath: Well, I think it was for my brother's health. The climate was pretty bad there. I'm sure that was why they moved, because they thought this would be a more healthful climate for him.
Teiser: And your father continued his occupation?

Cravath: Yes, he was an electrical and illuminating engineer, but when he came out here he did some work for the PG&E or something--I mean, illuminating--but then he bought a business in Richmond, the Pioneer Electric Company. That was an electrical shop, but he did some consulting and other work too. But this Pioneer Electric Company he had until he moved away, I think, and sold his share of the business. He had a partner and they were very congenial and I think he enjoyed it.

Teiser: Who was his partner?

Cravath: A fellow named Mr. Charles Renwick.

Teiser: Did your family enjoy it in Berkeley?

Cravath: I think they enjoyed it. My brother went right into the University of California at Berkeley. You see, that worked out beautifully for him. He had done all the high school work. He was tutored quite a bit. He wasn't able to go to school all the time, but he was very brilliant, so he mastered all these things easily.

Teiser: Was he unusually young for college?

Cravath: No, no, just a normal age to go to college.

Teiser: So at the end of your year at Grinnell, you came here to Berkeley. Did you come out by yourself?

Cravath: I came out on the train and I stopped in Omaha, spent a week with my college roommate at Grinnell, and then I stopped off in Salt Lake City and spent a week with Gladys deGroot, who was one of my very best chums at the Art Institute the year before, and that was very pleasant to catch up after a year. She married one of the men in our class at the Art Institute.

Teiser: Do you still keep up with people from the Art Institute?

Cravath: No. As a matter of fact, I'm not very good at keeping up with people, no.

Harroun: This friend of yours in New England, in Boston--

Cravath: Louise Taylor.
Harroun: She was in high school with you?

Cravath: I can't remember. Because we were neighbors in Chicago and our backgrounds were just very similar. I mean, as young children, well, from grammar school on, we were very, very close friends.

Teiser: Is she an artist?

Cravath: Yes. She's the one that I told you went to the Art Institute and worked at the Boston Museum and she's done teaching. She isn't doing any painting now, but she did do designing. I mean, she had a couple of children, and as a professor's wife in South Hadley I think she's had a very busy life. But they've built a house recently that she designed, which is a fascinating house, and she's a good designer.

Teiser: When you then got to California, what time of year was it?

Cravath: It was summer.

Teiser: The first time you'd ever been here?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Yes, it was the first time I had ever been here.

Teiser: What was your first impression of it? Can you remember?

Cravath: Oh, yes. I can remember coming out on the train and, you know, you had heard about roses in California, and I was fascinated. I came out on the Western Pacific from Salt Lake City, you see, or from Ogden or wherever I got it, and we stopped at all these stations along the way, Sacramento and these places, and I was dazzled by all these roses, beautiful red roses at all the stations. And later I learned they were geraniums.

Never had I seen geraniums growing anywhere except in pots in kitchen windows, you see. I didn't realize they were great, big bushes. I think I was slightly disappointed that they weren't roses, but anyway [laughter] I was impressed with the geraniums!
Teiser: When you came, had you determined to go to the Art Institute here?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, my dear, may I correct you: the California School of Fine Arts. It hadn't been the Art Institute until about less than ten years ago, I think, over my great opposition, I might say--changing the name of it.

Teiser: You knew about it, then, before you came?

Cravath: Oh, yes. My family had found out all about it and wrote to me. They found out about Ralph Stackpole. You see, at that time he was teaching the sculpture class and he was very well thought of, a very good sculptor. So I was completely sold on the California School of Fine Arts when I came.

Well, when I arrived here, Stackpole was spending a year in France and Italy, so they were hard put for a sculpture teacher and they got this Italian, Giovanni Portinova, who couldn't speak one word of English. I remember so well in the class that he was so conscientious; he'd be there for three hours and just sit there. But he'd come up and he'd slice the feet off of my sculpture, saying, "Lili more elegant, lili more elegant." But he was very conscientious and he tried to communicate and he would work on our work, you see, to demonstrate. But it wasn't the most successful year as far as learning, because he couldn't communicate.

And the next year, my dear, they had Benny [Beniamino] Bufano, so I studied with Benny Bufano and that was an interesting year, very.

Teiser: Was he more able to communicate?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Oh, yes indeed.

Teiser: Was he a good teacher?

Cravath: Yes, he was a very good teacher. Well, his teaching was limited to his own style of doing things, but it was very interesting working with him, yes.

Teiser: Did you learn much?
Cravath: From Benny? Not too much, I don't think, but it was—you know, we had good models, and we worked.

I remember one day he was giving a lecture on anatomy when he pulled off his shirt. He was delighted to show off his beautiful torso! [Laughter] He pointed out all the muscles on his own. He was a character.

Teiser: A good showman?

Cravath: A good showman? Well, as you well know, having followed the press all these years, he was a good showman. He was a good showman then. I remember an exhibition of his at the City of Paris. They had a little gallery and it was beautiful, with his early things. (You will see some examples now at his show at the Academy of Sciences.)

Some of the early things that he'd done in China, I think, with the glazes, the beautiful colored glazes, like a portrait of his mother and some children's heads, these things were in this first exhibition that I saw.

Teiser: He had been in China by then?

Cravath: Right, right. He had worked in China, I think probably just the year before, or a year or two before. Of course, he was young then, because this was in '21 or '22, I guess.

Teiser: What year did you come here?

Cravath: Well, I was just trying to think. [Pauses] I graduated from high school I think at seventeen, in 1919. I was young. Yes, I think that was it. Then I had the year at the Art Institute, then the following year at Grinnell. So that would have been 1921, I believe.

Teiser: What else did you study that first year at the California School of Fine Arts?

Cravath: Oh, life drawing, and--

Teiser: Whom did you study that with?

Cravath: Lee Randolph, whose sister-in-law is upstairs now.
Teiser: Staying with you?

Cravath: Yes. She's my house guest.

Teiser: Was he a good teacher?

Cravath: Very good teacher, very good teacher. And some of the classes were taught by Spencer Macky, who was the dean of the school. Lee Randolph was the director, and Constance Macky, his wife, was on the faculty, and also Gertrude Partington Albright. I took composition or sketching classes from her, I remember, painting. She was a very good teacher and a very charming woman.

But, you see, half of every day I was in the sculpture class, three hours a day for five days a week. That was my opportunity. But I did have the other classes in the mornings.

Teiser: Was there a required curriculum there?

Cravath: No.

Teiser: You studied whatever you wanted?

Cravath: That's right. That's why I think I appreciate the Chicago Art Institute's sort of structured course. I still think it was a good idea.

Teiser: It seems to me that I remember Dorothy Cravath, your sister-in-law, saying that, as a youngster from Half Moon Bay, the California School of Fine Arts was just a new world and an amazement for her.

Cravath: Yes, it was.

Teiser: I presume that you by that time had been to enough schools and enough art schools so that it wasn't a great phenomenon.

Cravath: Well, the only other art school I'd been to was the Chicago Art Institute, which, of course, is a large and great school. If we can go back to the Art Institute--may we for a few minutes?--I think it's interesting to recall how the school was structured then, because originally men and women didn't work in the same life class, you see, from nude models. They had what was called the Women's Life Class Association and the
Cravath:  Men's Life Class Association. These were very special and exclusive organizations. But by the time I got there they were all very broad-minded and all of us beginners, who didn't belong to any associations, were all put in a life class together, men and women and nuns—not that nuns aren't women. I so clearly remember my first class. It was an interesting class. It was a huge life drawing class, and there were a number of nuns who were studying there.

So they didn't have any, shall we say moral or whatever their objections were originally, when they had had the two organizations. But the Men's Life Class Association and the Women's Life Class Association were still strong things, and the advanced students still worked in their separated classes.

I don't know how long that went on, but, oh, that was very important to those upperclassmen. But all of us beginners, freshmen or what have you, had to be dumped in together. [Laughter]

Teiser:  When you got to the California School of Fine Arts, what did they do about life classes?

Cravath:  Oh, just what they did in the first year in Chicago. Everybody was in classes together. So of course I was used to that because I wasn't invited—I didn't stay there at the Chicago Art Institute long enough to have an opportunity of belonging to the Women's Life Class Association. [Laughter]

Teiser:  Can you generalize at all about what the state of art was in San Francisco in those days as reflected by the California School of Fine Arts?

Cravath:  Yes, I think so. The California School of Fine Arts, as you know, was operated by the San Francisco Art Association. That's what the stationery said. Something like: "The California School of Fine Arts, operated by the San Francisco Art Association," which had been started in the 1870s to promote art in the community. They operated the school for many, many years.

But there were professional artists who belonged to the Art Association and they had the annual exhibitions. Of course, the art community was so much smaller that there was more unity. I mean, the big thing was the annuals until a few years ago, and then they got to be too big and then they separated them and had drawing and sculpture separately and prints and so forth.
Cravath: Now they don't even have a big annual. The community has gotten so big.

But there was a wonderful spirit and unity. I know Gertrude Murphy, who came out here years after I did and she came out from Chicago, recalls when she first came that there was this wonderful spirit among the artists, and they knew each other. We'd go to a preview at the museum, and you knew everybody. But now you go and you—it's because the community is so big and it isn't as unified as it was then.

Teiser: Did it have a reputation as being a center for excellence in art?

Cravath: Well, I think so. Of course, we thought our school was—I mean, I used to have my feelings hurt because when I first came to California the whole Middle West just didn't exist; I mean, it was San Francisco and New York, you see, and nothing in between. Of course, I felt the Art Institute was pretty good, which it was.

The California School of Fine Arts would send—there would be scholarships to the Art Students' League, and these were very coveted and each year somebody would win the scholarship and then go back to the Art Students' League if they could afford to do it.

Harroun: That was in New York?

Cravath: Yes, in New York. So, there was that liaison—I mean, San Francisco and New York. But, of course, we thought the California School of Fine Arts was, and I'm sure it was, a very highly thought of school. It was an affiliated college of the University of California. I don't know what it is now. I don't know what the relationship is quite, but it's quite different now and it's much larger.

Teiser: Did you feel the artists who were teaching there and the other students were of particularly fine quality?

Cravath: Yes, I did.

Teiser: Did you in any way compare them to Chicago?

Cravath: Chicago? Well, no. One of the greatest design teachers in Chicago at the time I was there—I didn't have the privilege of studying with him because he taught the upper class people—
Cravath: Hermann Rosse had taught at our school before. He went from the California School of Fine Arts to Chicago. So I think that the faculty was considered quite good. I mean, of course, I always thought that Ralph Stackpole--well, are we back on the California School of Fine Arts?

Teiser: Yes. Before we get on to Ralph Stackpole, let me ask you again about these first impressions because, as I say, by then you'd had some experience. Did you find the arts in San Francisco, not necessarily in the art school but in the whole community, stimulating?

Cravath: Yes, yes. I don't know which year it was, the first year, there was an exhibition of French painting and sculpture in Polk Hall, I think--the Civic Auditorium--well, either Polk or Larkin Hall. That's when I saw my first Bourdelles, whom I admired very much, and I'll have to tell you about going to his museum in Paris last spring. Anyway, there were some very fine Bourdelles there and all the French Impressionists. This was my introduction to that, but it came in San Francisco, you see, not in--well, in Chicago I'd seen some of these things, but Chicago was much larger and my gallery experience there--all I remember is the Art Institute. I suppose I went to other things.

But in San Francisco we went to the Palace of Fine Arts. That's where the annuals were in those days, in the old Palace of Fine Arts. The first time I ever exhibited in an Art Association annual, it was at the Palace of Fine Arts, and Dorothy likewise, I'm sure. Did she tell you that? No?

Harroun: No, we didn't get to that.**

Cravath: Oh, I wish you had.

Harroun: Yes. You'll have to fill that in.

Cravath: Yes.

*The work of Antoine Bourdelle. See also pp. 26-27.

**In the interview with Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli Cravath, March 20 and March 22, 1974, which is between pp. 277 and 278 of this interview with Ruth Cravath.
Cravath: physics laboratory at the University, far away. He didn't even know about it for a while, you see. Of course, it got to him. And I think Mother had been in the city shopping; I'm not sure.

But anyway, when I went home and got off the train at the Berkeley station, I was met there—no home. I think Mother met me. Did we stay with friends that first night? I guess so. And then we went immediately into the Lafayette Apartments, which were furnished, other than these wonderful beds, you see.

Teiser: Had you lost the whole library, for instance?

Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: Everything lost?

Cravath: Yes. Everything we had there. And it was a hot day, rather hot, and I had a hat that had a batik scarf that one of my fellow art students had made, and I thought that was a pretty beautiful hat, and then I had a suit that I liked, but I wasn't wearing any of those good clothes then. That was my great regret. I was just wearing some old ratty thing. And my friends got together and they clothed me and so forth. And the Red Cross provided me with my paint box, which I had for years and years and years.

Teiser: For heaven's sake!

Cravath: Yes, there was a well organized Red Cross to take care of people, and as an art student, that was one essential thing, you know. That was all I got from the Red Cross, but I was very grateful for it because I was going to school.

Teiser: By then were your friends in art school?

Cravath: Yes, yes. Beth Bradford, who lived in Stanford Court Apartments next door, was going to art school. She was a good friend of mine and she and her mother just got busy and clothed me, I remember. They were just darling. So it was quite a thing, though, that Berkeley fire. I didn't see it burning. It was just smouldering ashes when I got over there. I have a picture somewhere of us pawing through the ashes, picking up a few bent silver spoons.
THE BERKELEY FIRE OF 1923

Teiser: You were living in Berkeley, were you?

Cravath: Oh, yes, living in Berkeley. My family--let's see, where was our first place? We were burnt out in the Berkeley fire. They had moved from a flat on Henry Street to a place on LeRoy Avenue. That was a nice brown shingle house. I remember it was quite nice. That was the house that was burned. Then they lived in a temporary apartment.

Do you remember the Lafayette Apartments in Berkeley, that long, shiplike place? Well, right after the Berkeley fire we lived in the Lafayette Apartments because it was sort of a temporary emergency thing. It was a very amusing building. You don't remember that? It was on Haste Street, I think. It went straight through from Haste to another one. It was a great, big, wooden thing. They had beds where you could go to bed inside and then you just pulled the roof over and you were outside. Did you ever see that?

Harroun: No!

Cravath: It was a round thing that went over like this [gestures], in the living room. Here was the back, you know. It was up, and the bed was a part of the living room because they didn't have many bedrooms. But this was really quite a trick. I loved that! You get into bed and then you pull the roof over and you were outdoors.

Teiser: Instant sleeping porch.

Cravath: Instant sleeping porch. I've never seen it any other place. That's what I remember about the Lafayette Apartments.

Teiser: [Laughter] You pass over the Berkeley fire as if it happened every day! Did it disrupt your life?

Cravath: [Laughter] Well, the day of the Berkeley fire, I was at art school, working all day long, and I didn't know anything about it until I started to go home. My father, at the time, had gone to Seattle on business. I mean, he didn't travel very much in those days. He used to when I was young a great deal, consulting on illuminating, but somehow or other, he did go to Seattle. So he was away. My brother was wrapped up in the
Cravath: The college students carried things out of the houses and down to what they called "corporation yard," and Mother found one of our Navaho rugs, one or two Navaho rugs, that had been taken down there. And they could see that the furniture was taken out on the sidewalk from some of the hinges. They'd hauled things out, but the fire came so fast that except for that rug—I believe it was one—everything was burned right on the spot.

Teiser: Well, it wasn't sufficient to stop your career or to divert anybody from—

Cravath: Oh, no. My brother went on in the laboratory [laughter] and I went on at the art school.

Teiser: And your father went on in his business?

Cravath: Yes, yes. We just lost everything, that was all, all our possessions. But then people would send family photographs and things, you see, to us. And the furniture, the old Cravath furniture I have upstairs, came from Grinnell after that. We were in an apartment on Henry Street for a while, and then they got the place on Oxford Street, another brown shingle house, and it was from that house that I was married. But it was a big house, a two-story house, with four bedrooms.

In the meantime, they had sent out a lot of furniture from Grinnell. That's where I first lived with this Victorian stuff, you see.

Harroun: Had you lived with your grandparents when you went to school in Grinnell?

Cravath: Oh, no, no. They were long since gone to their rewards. My grandparents had been dead for years, yes. No, I used to look at the old house, but somebody else had it.

RALPH STACKPOLE

Teiser: We had come up to Stackpole. You did not study with him until your third year, then, at the art school?

Cravath: It must have been the third year, Ruth, as I think of it, because it was Portinova the first year, and then Benny Bufano the second
Cravath: year, and Stackpole came the third year. He returned from Europe.

Teiser: Had you been waiting for him all that time?

Cravath: Well, I was disappointed. I didn't know what I was waiting for. I mean, he was just a name to me, you see. But he was the greatest influence in sculpture in my life.

Teiser: Were you a good student?

Cravath: Yes, I was, if I may say. Emily Michels and I, I think, were two of the best in the class, to be perfectly frank, because I remember Stackpole saying to me, a couple of years later maybe, that I should go to Paris and study and then I could come back and teach there. Well, I got to teach there without going to Paris. But, no, there weren't very many women doing sculpture, you see. Emily Michels and I were the two serious ones. Oh, and dear Rosalie Maus was in the class, later Mrs. Truman Bailey. She has visited me here and made some molds for me. She's living in Southern California now.

Teiser: What men were in your class?

Cravath: Squire Knowles, whom you know. That's where I met Squire. And Billy Huff, who has done quite a bit of work for the University of California. Anyway, he's modeled quite a few things and he's living out in Lafayette now, I think. Let's see. Who else was in the class? Oh, yes. We had a fellow named Pogi, an American Indian, in the class. I mean, I've never heard of him since, but--oh, Ward Montague. He's someone whose name you may have heard who's continued to work. The last I saw him was at one of the museums. He's been living over in Bolinas or somewhere along there. And Squire Knowles, although Squire did more painting.

And then dear Joe Ash, who was a--there were GI's--he'd been in the war and he was in the class. He was a wonderful character. He had all sorts of wonderful stories about the woods and animals and so forth. He wasn't a terribly good artist, but he was very serious. He liked doing it. I mean, not many of those people have made great names as sculptors, but Billy Huff has been very successful in his way, and Squire certainly, but not as a sculptor, I guess. I was in the class for several years.
Teiser: Had you seen much of Ralph Stackpole's work before you started studying with him?

Cravath: No, no, I hadn't. I mean, I hadn't been to his studio. During those years that I was studying with him, he did the fountain for Sacramento, which is right downtown near the station. You know, the pink Tennessee marble fountain. Some of the marble from that is still here, because they changed the design, and I've done several statues out of the marble from the stoneyard from that--

Teiser: It remained in the stoneyard?

Cravath: It remained in the stoneyard. What happened was he'd designed this marvelous, beautiful fountain. You've seen it, I think, with the figures and the water. And then there was a change in the design and, of course, in those days, I guess, marble was not so expensive or hard to get, so there were many sections that had been cut and delivered to his stoneyard which he didn't use, you see, and they were there all the years. And when I inherited the stoneyard later, it was still there. He was working on that while he was teaching at the art school. Then he did this miner for Sacramento, and I remember that, in Indiana limestone; that is out in some park in Sacramento, not right downtown.

Of course, it was very glamorous to go to his stoneyard when we were students. I just thought that was the most marvelous place. So, I was pretty happy later when I inherited the stoneyard and had it myself. But it was very exciting in those days because, I mean, his work has always been-- That's his [pointing], that plaster hand from the model of Pacifica.* It's very weathered.

I've always felt the way he did. I mean, I've loved his work. I mean, he's the only person I really would like to have been able to just do things that he did. He's the only sculptor. I mean, Benny Bufano's things I could like, but I never had any desire to do Bufano's style of work.

Teiser: Was Stackpole a good teacher?

*For the Golden Gate International Exposition. See p. 108.
Cravath: Yes, I think he was. I remember so well. He had a little moustache and he, with his thumb, would go over the clay and there would be clay all over his moustache. I remember that. But he was able to communicate ideas. I think he was a very good teacher, a very good teacher.

Teiser: Where had he received his training?

Cravath: Well, he was a student of Arthur Putnam. Julie Heyneman's biography of Putnam (Desert Cactus was the name of the one that I read, and I think it was published again with a different title--just his name*) was a very interesting story. Stackpole's stoneyard, where we used to like to go--he had that stoneyard at the time that I was studying with him in art school--had previously been Putnam's, I believe. So, sculptors had used that for some time. And Putnam was his teacher here, locally. I don't know whether Putnam was teaching at the art school or what. But then Stackpole studied in Paris too.

Teiser: With whom did he study there, do you know?

Cravath: I don't know. It must have been in a time when Rodin was there, but I really don't know whether he--I think he was influenced too by Antoine Bourdelle. I mean, that was the Frenchman that I think influenced me more than anybody. When I was in Paris last spring, Audrey [Evans] and I went to see Bourdelle's studio, now a museum, and she was interested because she could see the influence in my work. That is, she imagined she could.

When you go to Paris again, don't miss the Bourdelle Museum. It's on the Rue d'Antoine Bourdelle and it's the Musée d'Antoine Bourdelle, and it's where he lived and he worked. It was his studio and his home and all his things are there--casts and casts. It's fascinating. When I show you my slides--you haven't seen them yet of the last trip--you'll see a couple that were taken there. It's funny it's not better known than it is, because everybody talks about going to the Rodin Museum. But this, to me, had much more immediacy. It was much more intimate. It was the man. The Rodin Museum has been so sort of polished up in this elegant house. You don't feel he worked there, of course, but this one you do. I don't know whether some of his descendents that are operating it are living there now or not, but it may be perhaps.

Teiser: And you saw his work really before you became acquainted with Stackpole's work.

Cravath: Bourdelle's? No, I think it was about--I don't know. I saw his work at this exhibition in San Francisco. Now, which year? That might have been before Stackpole came back; I've lost track of the time. But it was those first years. It was either the year that Portinova or it might have been the year that Benny Bufano was teaching, but it was in the early '20s, shall we say. There was this magnificent show of French work, and all the Impressionists were there, Renoir and Gauguin. It was really a great thing in San Francisco.

Harroun: And at that time there was nothing comparable to the Museum of Modern Art?

Cravath: No. The San Francisco Museum wasn't built yet. I remember when that opened in the '30s, and this was more than ten years earlier. It was in Polk or Larkin Hall, one of them, and it was very well presented. We used to go down all the time from art school because all the painters were fascinated. This was a big thing. It was a great opportunity. It was a marvelous exhibition. I'd like to see the same thing right now. I mean the selection.

Harroun: Were there continuing exhibits in that hall?

Cravath: No, I don't think so, Catherine. This was unique. This was a very special one.

Teiser: How long did you study with Stackpole?

Cravath: [Pauses] I don't know. I studied in the daytime, maybe a couple of years, and then I went to night school and he taught the night class. When I went to the night school, I had my first studio in the Montgomery Block building. I worked in the daytime there.

And also I had a job, I remember, when I was going to art school at night, with Guggenheim and Company. I was a filing clerk. Guggenheim dried fruits, nuts, and honey. I suppose they aren't still, but they were on California Street. That was my one experience in the business world. [Laughter]
Patrons of the Arts

Teiser: I believe other people who went to art school in your era, many of them who really had very little financial backing, were given scholarships by wealthy San Franciscans, sometimes anonymously. Was that customary, do you remember, for students to get help from individuals?

Cravath: From outside? Well, I don't remember it too specifically. There were scholarships at the art school and there were funds. I mean, I think there was the D.N. & E. Walter, the Edgar Walter family, you know. I think they gave money; it came through the Art Association, I think, because those wealthy families supported the Art Association and, I think, contributed that way. I don't remember specifically.

And, of course, there was dear Albert Bender. You knew him, didn't you?

Teiser: No, I didn't know him, but tell about him.

Cravath: Well, he was a great friend of the artists and for years he would give—well, the Bender Collection at the museum* was built up, and some people are snooty about it, but I think it was a great thing. He would buy from young artists and struggling artists and mature artists too, any artists, a piece of work for a hundred dollars (it was just a flat thing) and give it to the museum. Well, artists were tickled to death to have something permanently taken care of at the museum, you see. I mean, you know it is in a museum collection. He didn't pretend that they weren't worth more than that, but he let the artist choose something that he was willing to let them have, and that's the way the museum acquired my marble portrait head of Spencer Macky. It belongs to the museum. I saw it a number of years ago when they had these shows all over town of different periods. It was at the Labaudt Gallery. It was the "Early Bohemians," or something that it was called. But that's what built up the Bender Collection.

I was very offended a couple of years ago when the San Francisco Museum of Art had this auction, very offended, because without notifying the artists--

Harroun: You were furious!

*San Francisco Museum of Art, now named San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.
Cravath: Everybody was furious about that. There was this lovely little head by Dorothy that somebody bought. But, well, I went through the sale with a fine-tooth comb and noted all the things that were there, and there were two or three paintings of Stackpole's. Oh, there was very good stuff there! And what really offended me more—they didn't give the artists or the survivors or the families, didn't even notify them and give them an opportunity to go and bid and buy. So I informed Dorothy and the people I found, but they hadn't known. So I think that was pretty shabby because Bender, of course, thought that they would be kept at the museum.* Well, so much for that.

But that's what Bender did—very generous, helping the artists.

BEGINNING A CAREER

Teiser: You went to art school full time, then, three or four years?

Cravath: Three years anyway. I'm not sure. But I went full time, or it may have been that when I was working at Guggenheim and Company, I worked there in the morning and went to art school in the afternoon. I really don't remember just how that worked out. That might have been that I had a morning job because the sculpture class was usually in the afternoon, as I remember it.

Teiser: So you could work and you could attend in any pattern you wanted?

Cravath: Right, right. You know where it was. It was where the Mark Hopkins Hotel is now, and that old stonework there was part of it. So it was very convenient, if I was working at Guggenheim and Company, just to come up the hill, you see, for the afternoon class. I may have worked there full time part of the time, but I have a funny feeling that it was a part-time job.

Teiser: So after that you felt you were accomplished enough to begin your own career?

*See also pp. 76-79.
Cravath: Right. Then I had a studio and I exhibited with the Art Association. The first thing that I had that was accepted was, I think, a figure in plaster, which I no longer have. Also that red sandstone group that's in the basement was exhibited.

Teiser: Can you describe it?

Cravath: Yes. It's called "The Rock and the Wave" and I did that at art school, the first stone cutting, or I started it there. The stone was there. It was from the old Spreckles mansion, I think, this red sandstone. It was the second year; it was when Bufano was there that I started that. I did finish it in my studio in the Montgomery Block later, but I remember starting it. That was my first stone cutting. This [points to piece of sculpture] was the second, I think. It was the same stone as this, this head.

Teiser: Would you describe this head?

Cravath: Yes. That I did from a portrait of Dorothy. I mean, I don't consider it a portrait, but I'd done a plaster head of Dorothy and I used that as a point of departure. And I won half of a first prize at the Art Association annual for this. It was very funny. The jury couldn't make up their minds between me and Gottardo Piazzoni, the painter, who had done a beautiful stone head of one of his daughters. So they divided the prize, and I have a cartoon somewhere that Dorr Bothwell made of Piazzoni in his big hat and me sitting down, you see [laughter]; each of us got half of the first prize for sculpture.

Teiser: [Laughter] Was that in 1924?

Cravath: It's probably in my scrapbook.

Harroun: [Reading notes made from scrapbook.] In May, 1924, the 49th Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association, it said, this is a quote, that you were "the youngest artist to win honors." It said, "Twenty-one year old student, pupil of Stackpole, honorable mention for woman's head." Now, would that be this? [Continuing reading]: "Also award to Piazzoni."

Cravath: Oh, yes, that would be this, then, yes. This was it; if it says "also award to Piazzoni," that was it, yes.

Teiser: What was Piazzoni like?
Cravath: Well, he was a sweet little Italian, not very tall, and soft brown eyes, and a nice compact moustache, and he wore a black hat, a round hat, and always a black bow tie—-not a formal bow tie, but one of these big ribbon ties.

Harroun: Oh, a flowing tie.

Cravath: Yes. Not a formal one, but you know the kind. The kind that we used to wear as little girls, or I did. I mean. They were about four inches wide and about eighteen inches long and they made a bow. Well, that's what he had. Well, I will show you a picture of him that's in my office, a very good picture.

And his daughter Mireille, of course—you should get some tapes from her. She's great, his daughter.*

Teiser: Piazzoni was older than you?

Cravath: Oh, well, yes. He was of my parents' generation. He had been a painter for years. You know the murals he painted in the library.

Harroun: The San Francisco Public Library, yes.

Cravath: He had done those. But he was just doing sculpture as a mature artist, a generation older than I.

Harroun: I didn't realize that he was a sculptor.

Cravath: He didn't do a great deal, but he did this very nice stone head.**

Harroun: Of his daughter, did you say?

Cravath: I think it was one of his daughters.

Teiser: When you got the award, were you surprised?

Cravath: I think I was surprised and pleased, yes.

*Now Mrs. Philip Wood.

**That won the award.
FELLOW ARTISTS

Teiser: Can you find Dorr's cartoon inspired by those awards?

Cravath: Yes. It was awfully cute because it showed Piazzoni and myself sitting down. It really was darling. I have kept all Dorr's cartoons and letters in a folder because they are so interesting. She used to cartoon all these events I'd tell her about, you see. She made a wonderful cartoon of my fire on Montgomery Street. She made several cartoons of that. That inspired her! [Laughter]

Teiser: You knew her in art school?

Cravath: Oh, yes. She and Dorothy and I were all in art school at the same time. But the funny thing about Dorr Bothwell was she declared she didn't remember me until we met up in the mountains. Dorothy and her parents had taken Dorr on this camping trip. They were very close friends, Dorothy and Dorr. They shared studios together and they were just very, very close in the art school days. And they were there a year before I was, or maybe two years. So, you see, I was a newcomer.

But anyway, I was camping up in the Sierra with Mary Wilkie and along came Dorothy and Dorr with her parents. I mean, it just happened that we met. Of course, Dorothy and I were delighted and so we did some things together. Then, of course, Dorr remembered me from then, but she declares she didn't remember me at art school. But then she did subsequently remember me at art school.

Teiser: Were there others besides those whom you've mentioned who were with you?

Cravath: Well, Edith Hamlin was in that group. And Dorothy Duncan I didn't know in art school, but Dorothy Cravath knew her because she was a year ahead of me. She married Stafford Duncan, and they met at art school.

Teiser: That was quite a group, wasn't it.

Cravath: Yes. Oh, yes.

Teiser: Mallette Dean?
Cravath: Let's see. He taught there, I think, later. I don't remember him in school, but my memory isn't too good.*

Teiser: Were there many night students?

Cravath: Yes. Oh, the night school was very good, very good.

   Lucille Austin went to art school. She was Lou MacLean; it was just before she married George [Post]. I remember Mrs. Albright was very interested in her work at that time.

   This all took place in the '20, all within the decade.

   [Looking at photograph] Everybody's in this picture. This is a marvelous picture. This is Xavier Martinez, the father of my dear friend Kai,**(She looks exactly like him--her profile.) And this is Gottardo Piazzoni. See the moustache? And here on the wall [in the photograph] there's a poster: "Mr. and Mrs. Piazzoni on the way to the ball." [Chuckle]

   This is Harry Leffler. Now, I don't who he was. This is George Sterling, of course.

Teiser: Who is this?

Cravath: This glamorous lady is the only one who isn't identified. She's George Sterling's friend. See? [Reading caption on back of picture] "George Sterling's friend." Everybody else is identified. This is interesting. Sitting next to George,"Georgie Boardwell," [reading from caption]. I don't know who she is, but she looks like a nice person.

   This is Ralph Stackpole.

Teiser: Very handsome, was he?

Cravath: Oh, I think so, yes. He was slight.

Harroun: He was slight and not very tall, was he?

*See also Mallette Dean, Artist and Printer, a Regional Oral History Office interview completed in 1970.

**Micaela Martinez DuCasse. See also Elsie Whitaker Martinez, San Francisco Bay Area Writers and Artists, a Regional Oral History Office memoir completed in 1969.
Cravath: He was small, slender and slight. And this is Mrs. Harry Leffler. Isn't she pretty? But look at her sensible shoes, and then look at this razzle-dazzle "George Sterling's friend." Isn't that a scream? [Laughter]

Harroun: Yes. [Laughter] She looks like she was out of the Theda Bara era.

Cravath: Yes, doesn't she.

Teiser: In this group photograph, where was Mrs. Piazzoni, besides in the poster?

Cravath: I don't know.

Teiser: Where was this picture taken and when?

Cravath: It was taken in Oakland somewhere. [Reading from caption] "Artists' Ball, Mardi Gras, Hotel Oakland, Tuesday night." Now, whether this was taken there, or whether they had dinner together and went to the ball, or what, I don't know, but this is pasted on the back here.

Teiser: What year was it?

Cravath: 1919.

Teiser: How did you come by it?

Cravath: Well, I'll tell you. You know the balcony of my studio; Stackpole had all of his stuff piled in there, and when I moved out Helen Bray went through the things. I took the picture, and Jay Risling made a few copies. But I think this is the original one that I found up there. That's how I came by it.

Harroun: Wasn't there a little mural in Stackpole's stoneyard?

Cravath: There was one that was above the door in the shed. Well, we thought it was a Diego Rivera, and I have it in the basement. When Stackpole was here, he said no, it wasn't. He said it was probably Clifford Wight who did it. But as far as I know, the larger mural in the shed was by Stackpole; the Dixon family and the Piazzoni family and the Stackpole family were in it. Some family members took parts of it before they tore down that shed. I called all the people that were in it and tried to do the
Cravath: right thing, you know, when they were going to tear the place down. And the Dixons came, I think, and cut part out; at least they cut the thing of Maynard. I'll have to ask Edie [Hamlin] if she knows where that is.

Upstairs, just outside the studio, were these two little murals. Stackpole's was over the door. You remember the little boy wee-weening [chuckles], the woman holding the child out the window? Everybody who came into the studio had to duck under that.

That was Stackpole's. But there were two little things that were real Diegos* there, and Carl James, who bought the building, laboriously removed those. I remember his doing it. I saw him take those out.

But the one that I loved was the one in the shed that had all the people--the Dixon family and the Piazzoni family and Stackpole, and I think Ginette Stackpole. I mean all of that group. They were all there. Maynard Dixon--Dorothea Lange was his wife then and she was in it, and Danny with his brows going this way [gestures], Danny Dixon, and I think John was a baby sitting on her lap, if I'm not mistaken. That was a wonderful group and a wonderful fellowship at the time.**

*Diego Rivera murals.

**For additional recollections of the Stackpole studio and building, see pp. 75 and 205-207.
Cravath: My first studio might be kind of interesting to mention. This is the transition from art school, isn't it?

Teiser: Yes. We thought that that would come next in the interview.

Cravath: The reason I looked this up, the first studio--it made me remember that when I was in art school, four or five of us rented a place, a little flat, on Telegraph Hill, which we used as a studio. There was Marian Trace, her sister Theo Trace, and Ward Montague, who's done quite a bit of work since, and a chap named Austin James. We set it up just as a working studio, but we used to have fun there. We'd have supper there sometimes, and we called it The Village, of course.

Teiser: What street was it on, Ruth?

Cravath: It was on Filbert Street, right near the top of the hill, about two houses down the hill from the grammar school that's up there, the Cooper School, I think. It was a little flat at the rear. We had to go through a passage and then up these steps to it. And we really had a lot of fun there. I had forgotten it. I see you have the date in your outline, 1922. It would have been about that time, while we were still in school.

Teiser: But you didn't stay there?

Cravath: We didn't live there, no.

Teiser: You didn't stay there overnight?

Cravath: No, I don't think I ever did.
Teiser: You were commuting back and forth to Berkeley?

Cravath: To Berkeley, yes, while I was going to art school.

But then my first studio was not too long after that, in the Montgomery Block, which would perhaps be 1923, or '24. Maybe it's 1924. Studio 316.

Teiser: On the third floor?

Cravath: On the third floor, and next to me were Dorr Bothwell and Dorothy Wagner, who you knew first as Dorothy Puccinelli. Marian Trace and I had the studio 316 together, and Dorr and Dorothy had 317. On the other side of us was a poet, Madefree Odner. Did you ever hear of him? Subsequently, Otis Oldfield moved into the studio on the other side of Dorr, which would have been 318. I remember he was there when I was still--I used to stay all night there. I lived there. Well, I'd go home to Berkeley for weekends, but I really worked and lived there.

I remember one night a rat came into my room. There were lots of rats in the walls of the Montgomery Block. Incidentally, you know, the Montgomery Block is now that pyramid?*

Teiser: Oh, yes.

Cravath: [Laughter] I look at that and think, "What a change!"

Well, I remember being so terrified at this big rat that I went out in the hall and Otis Oldfield came out, and he was so serious; he didn't laugh at me. He said, "Can I assist you?" [Laughter]

I had that studio for a number of years, until 1927 or '28--no, '27, I guess--when Marian and I moved out to 1813 Pierce Street.

Teiser: Describe a typical studio, or, say, yours, in the Montgomery Block. How big a room was it? What was it like? How was it arranged?

_____________________________
*The Transamerica building occupies the site of the Montgomery Block.
Cravath: Well, do you remember the Montgomery Block? Yes. Well, the Montgomery Block had four floors. The first floor was offices. Artists had nothing to do with that. And the windows on the second floor were very, very tall—the ceilings were high—to get light. On the third floor, the windows were not quite so long because it was higher and there was more light, so that they were quite high, but not as high as the second floor. On the fourth floor, they were smaller. It was a well designed building, you see. Nowadays, they're all the same, these buildings.

It was a beautifully designed building. The Montgomery Block was a beautiful building. It had these sculptured heads around the outside. It was too bad, in a way, to tear it down.

Teiser: Your studio had a great deal of light, then?

Cravath: Yes. Well, our studio was on the court. There was a big, open court. We had north light. It was very good light for working because there were two great, big, tall windows. Every studio had two windows and some of them had running water and some didn't, but we had a basin. We had a luxurious one. We had running water and we had a little two-burner gas plate that we cooked on.

Teiser: Was it just one undivided room?

Cravath: One fairly good-sized room, yes, with the two windows and a little bit of space on each side. They were office building rooms, you see, but they were fairly good-sized and they were all about the same size. That is, the floor space was about the same, with the exception of—well, on the fourth floor, or I guess on every floor, there was one at the end of the hall that had only one window for some reason or other, some architectural reason.

Well, while I was there, the art school was moving from California Street. I mean, they were building their present quarters. It was then the California School of Fine Arts. So, while the building was going on, they were temporarily located at the foot of California Street, California near Market, and they didn't have any facilities or any space there to have a sculpture class. So I had a class in the Montgomery Block. I had the room at the end of the hall on the fourth floor for it. It was quite a big room. I mean, the floor space was quite
adequate because we had nothing but the modeling stands, you see, and the material. We had to use entirely artificial light because there was just one window.

But I remember Spencer Macky came down to see me from the art school, so they sent people there because there was no other sculpture class in the city.

Teiser: And you taught it?

Cravath: Yes, I taught it; it was my class. It was part of what was called the Cravath School of Sculpture. [Laughter]

Anyway, Jacques Schnier did his first sculpture in that class. He'd graduated from the University of California in engineering (and architecture, I think, but I know engineering), and he'd worked several years. He decided he wanted to be a sculptor. He was a wonderful student; he did beautiful work from the beginning.

And another person who did his first sculpture in that class was Raymond Puccinelli.

So I had that studio just for the class, and then the studio downstairs, 316. That was 427 or something like that.

Teiser: Were you on the regular faculty of the art school?

Cravath: No, no. That was just because, well, they didn't have a place to have sculpture. Then, after they finished their building and moved to the hill, a number of years later, I was on the faculty. I taught the sculpture class there, the day and the night class for a while, and then part of the time just the night class, for a number of years. But I was not connected with the school officially at that earlier time.

Teiser: I see. Just teaching.

Cravath: But I did quite a bit of work there when I think back on it.

Harroun: Were you still going to school?

Cravath: We had the studio several years, and when I first went down there I was going to night school at the California School of Fine Arts; that was when there was a class at the school. But
Cravath: when the school moved, there was no class up there, and then I had the day class.

Teiser: What did Stackpole do then?

Cravath: Let's see. When I first went to art school, you know, he was in Europe, in France. Yes, he had been teaching at the school and I don't know where he was at the time, but he wasn't teaching a private class. I think that's how I happened to get the class, or have the class, because he wasn't teaching and there was no other class available.

Teiser: When you had that studio--you just said you did a good deal of work there--were you doing private commissions?

Cravath: Yes, well, just a few. I did the fountain for a garden over in Piedmont of a crouching child. I think you've seen pictures of it somewhere. I did that there in that studio. I modeled it in clay.

Teiser: Whose garden was that?

Cravath: I think the name is Mrs. Johnson.

Harroun: I have a note of it here. Mrs. Murray Johnson.

Cravath: It was a little child, a little girl; the child of a friend of mine who'd gone to art school with me posed for it. That was one of the few commissions I had. Well, anyway, I did that, or I made the little model for it, and I think I did the larger figure there too that was subsequently cast in cement for that garden.

Teiser: Did the woman come to you to have it done, or did you--?

Cravath: The commission came about through Willa Cloys, who was the landscape architect. Her name was Willa Cloys Carmack after she married.

I did a number of portraits there, and I did some things that I exhibited. The first things I exhibited in the annual. I think I finished that red sandstone group called "The Rock and the Wave," which I showed in the annual, in that studio. It's a little hard to remember just where I did which.
Teiser: You say "portraits." Was this something that you did that other people were not doing?

Cravath: No. I think most all sculptors have done portraits. Sometimes when I say "portraits," people seem to think that I mean paintings.

Teiser: You mean sculptured heads.

Cravath: Sculptured heads, yes.

Teiser: Whole figures too?

Cravath: No. Well, there are whole-figure portraits, but I didn't do any whole figures, just heads in that particular studio. I did a number of children's heads.

Teiser: Was there a tradition of doing this here? Did people--say, well-to-do families--like to have their children's portraits done in sculpture?

Cravath: Well, I don't know because most of the portraits I did there I did just on my own. They are not commissions and I don't think there was a great deal of it. I mean, they were few and far between, I think, the portraits that were commissioned.

Teiser: You've since done quite a number of them that were commissioned?

Cravath: Yes, I have, over the years, but, you see, it's been a long time. Yes, I've done a lot of portraits. But that was a little early.

Teiser: Was that a kind of sculpture that particularly interested you, the likeness?

Cravath: Yes, I've always liked to do it. Portrait sculpture is not necessarily an art, but I think I have sort of a knack for getting a likeness. I did a portrait of Catherine Harroun some years later! [Laughter]

Harroun: I have it.

Cravath: Well, the funny thing about that portrait was Squire came into my studio--that was years later when I was on Leavenworth Street--and he said, "That looks like a friend of mine." [Laughter] Sure enough, it was. I was glad it looked like her.
Teiser: Under what circumstances was the portrait of Catherine done?

Cravath: She didn't commission me to do it. I liked her head. I asked her to sit for me. She did me a favor and a kindness sitting for me.

Teiser: That was the way you did most of them?

Cravath: That's the way I did most of them in those early days, yes.

Teiser: Who were some of the other early subjects besides Catherine?

Cravath: They were of friends, like the one I did of Catherine, and many of them have become very distinguished since, as Catherine has.

Teiser: Who were some of them?

Cravath: Another one was Helen Schoeni. She died several years ago, but she was very successful in theatre work, directing little theatres. Bill Zacha in Mendocino was very devoted to her. He has named the theatre up there after her as sort of a memorial. When I did the portrait, she was a librarian. She was working in libraries and she shared an apartment with Edith Hamlin, who was going to art school, and that's how I knew Helen Schoeni, through Edith, and she was a very interesting girl for sculpture. She had this marvelous head of curly hair, just tight curls, and I'm so sorry I destroyed that head. You know, you go through a period of destroying things. She came years later to see me and she wanted it. She would have bought it and it would probably be nice to have it up there at the theatre now because, as I remember, it was a pretty good portrait, but people didn't take my portraits very seriously and I was making a move and I destroyed it. I'm sorry I did.

Teiser: What material were you using?

Cravath: Clay. It was cast in plaster, just like the one I did of you, Catherine. That was before I was using hydrocal. It was cast in plaster and I think I put a patina on it, a bronze patina.

And then I did several children's heads, children of friends, at that time.

Teiser: Do you particularly like children as subjects?
Cravath: Yes, I like children, and then I remember there was a great deal of pressure from my mother. She wanted me to specialize in children's heads. She thought I was wasting my time if I did too many other things. [Laughter]

Teiser: Incidentally, did your family approve of your doing such a wild thing as having a studio in the Montgomery Block?

Cravath: Not entirely, I don't think. They were a little dubious about it.

Teiser: But they didn't object?

Cravath: Not really object.

And during the time I was in the Montgomery Block, I enjoyed doing painting. Oh, I'm speaking of portraits. That's when I painted the portrait of Dorr Bothwell and I painted a portrait of Barbara Benham that somebody bought. I enjoyed painting very much, and that my mother didn't approve of because she thought I was spreading myself too thin. She thought I should be concentrating on children's portraits and sculpture. Dorr has the portrait that I did of her.

Teiser: It was in oil?

Cravath: Yes, quite a big oil painting.

Teiser: You've always sketched, haven't you?

Cravath: Yes, but not enough. I don't sketch as much as I should.

Teiser: Did you then?

Cravath: Yes. I drew from life once or twice a week at that time, right.

I've been thinking back on the Montgomery Block because so many of the artists have been in the Montgomery Block and it's an historical building that's no longer here. I thought that maybe I should mention a few of the others that were there.

Adeline Kent had a studio there, and Paul Hunt. I don't know what's happened to Paul Hunt. And Ward Montague. And many, many years later, Mrs. Sargeant, Geneve Rixford Sargeant, was there. Over all the years there were artists in the Montgomery Block. And Harry Dixon had a studio there, you
Cravath: know, the one who did the metal work; he was there I think when I was there. But I know Addie* was there when I was. Jacques Schnier had a studio there for a while.

Harroun: Harry Dixon was no relation to--

Cravath: Maynard Dixon? Yes, yes. He was a brother of Maynard.

Teiser: Did you all know each other?

Cravath: Yes. The artists' community was not as spread out as it is now. I mean, most of the artists knew the other artists.

Teiser: You were speaking of drawing from life and sketching from life. As I remember, people would get together and--

Cravath: Hire a model, as we still do.

Harroun: I know Raymond [Puccinelli] spoke of that when we were talking to him. Apparently that meant quite a lot to him.

Cravath: Yes, it did to all of us. As a matter of fact, I go now every Monday morning to Charlie Farr's.** That's where I do these wax figures. I was there this morning. There's my effort [gestures]. I never bring them upstairs, but it was pouring rain when I came home so I did. [Chuckle]

Teiser: Describe what it is in words.

Cravath: Well, it's a standing figure of a black model who is just perfectly beautiful. He's one of the best models we have. As you see, I have some of the torso. I mean, it's all there except the lower legs. I'll mount him on a base.

Teiser: How tall is it?

Cravath: That figure is about twelve inches high. I am still working from the model.

*Adeline Kent, later Adeline Kent Howard.

**Charles Griffin Farr
LIFE DRAWING AND MODELS

Cravath: I don't want to get ahead, but for years, when I had the big studio on Montgomery Street, we had drawing once a week at night there. You remember, life drawing? You probably came, Catherine.

Harroun: Yes, I did.

Cravath: Yes, you came some. Lots of my friends who weren't full time artists would come and spend the evening drawing from the model.

Teiser: Has it been usually that the person with the largest studio would have the drawing sessions?

Cravath: Or with an ample studio, yes. [Laughter] I wouldn't do very well in my little studio here now having a group. There just isn't enough room, you see. So we're very fortunate that Charlie Farr is here on Potrero Hill and we use his studio.

Teiser: How many people are in that group?

Cravath: Oh, between eight and fifteen usually.

Teiser: How much did you pay for a model when you were at the Montgomery Block?

Cravath: Well, when I went to school in the early days, we paid models--draped models for sitting for portraits, or with their clothes on, fifty cents an hour, and we paid nude models seventy-five cents an hour. Now we pay everybody four dollars an hour, draped or undraped. [Laughter] Nobody's less than that.

But I remember at art school we had one model whom we called "the bronze man." He was super duper and he would get a dollar an hour, and this was just absolutely fabulous. Just fabulous!

Teiser: Why was he so good?

Cravath: Well, he had very fine muscles and he knew he was good, and he was good. [Laughter] So he demanded he earned a dollar an hour.
Teiser: Incidentally, this is something we should probably get down; are models a group in themselves, or do they melt into the general population?

Cravath: They melt into the general population and some of them--for the last, oh, over twenty years, there's been a models' guild. And our beloved Florence Allen--you know Florence. She was Florence Wissinger when I first knew her. She is probably the best beloved woman in San Francisco in the artists' community. A number of years ago there was an exhibition at the U.C. Medical Center--perhaps you saw it--of work that Florence had sat for. All the artists had things, you know, that Florence had been the model for. So this was a great exhibition, and there was a lovely preview. It was a wonderful party.

But, as I say, I'm sure she's the best known and the best loved woman among the artists in the community. Now she isn't posing any more. I've been able to get her to pose for me occasionally for my class; she likes us. But she works over at the Arts and Crafts and she's part of the administration. She hires the models over there. (That reminds me; I have to call her about this man tonight. I promised him I would.)

But she was the first president of the models' guild, which is a union, you see. I found this morning they said they weren't taking new people into the guild until September and the office is only open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday--there's nobody there Friday--at certain hours. I guess it's a good thing. Of course, they set the wages and certain rules. But the trouble with the models' guild is that they seem to think sometimes that whatever model they provide you with is all right. I mean, you want your own model sometimes. But there are a lot of very good models who have just come to town and haven't yet joined the union and, fortunately, I'm a small enough operation here that I don't have to hire union models. I can hire whomever I wish, which is good.

Teiser: Do models tend to stay in that profession fairly long?

Cravath: Yes, some of them do. I suppose it's like anything else. Some of them do other things. I still get Christmas cards from Lois Mini, who was one of our favorite models, who has been a teacher for many years, a teacher of children. I mean she did other things, but she was a very good model when she was young. And, as I say, Florence isn't generally posing, and Florence has been posing for me for over thirty years, so she's not as
Cravath: young as she used to be, but she's just as beautiful. I mean, she's just as firm and wonderful.

Teiser: Well, I led you off, and I'm glad I did.

Cravath: I think it's interesting, the models.

Well, are we still in the Montgomery Block?

Teiser: You're still in the Montgomery Block--do you have some more to say about it?

Cravath: Well, I had a long conversation with Helen Oldfield yesterday morning because I thought she'd remember some of the dates. I really think we ought to digress and speak about the Oldfield wedding in the Stackpole's stoneyard. It was in November, 1926. Before this wedding, I had moved from the Montgomery Block to Pierce Street, but Otis took his bride to the Montgomery Block. They were there for, I guess, a month or two before they moved to Telegraph Hill. So that really belongs to the next period.

Teiser: Well, tell about it.

THE OLDFIELD WEDDING AND THE MODERN GALLERY

Cravath: I had moved to 1813 Pierce Street, and the first time I ever met Helen Oldfield, Otis brought her out there, I remember, and I met her. This was before they were married, and Marian Trace and I were in that studio, where I was for a number of years. The Oldfield wedding was '26, so it must have been '25 or '26 when I moved out there.

The Oldfield wedding was in the stoneyard which was later mine, Ralph Stackpole's stoneyard. It was a marvelous affair. The bride came down the steps into the stoneyard from the studio. It was in the autumn, so there was a beautiful decoration of autumn leaves and gourds and all sorts of pumpkins and things. She was married by Henry Ohlhoff, an Episcopal minister for whom the Henry Ohlhoff house* is named.

*In San Francisco.
Harroun: Did you arrange the wedding?

Cravath: No, no. I was a guest, but Stackpole, I think, arranged it. Henry Ohlhoff liked the artists and they were good friends. He married their eldest daughter too.

Teiser: Was it a formal wedding?

Cravath: It was an original wedding. [Laughter] It wasn't very formal. There was one attendant, her friend. Helen Oldfield since then has become a very, very close friend of mine. I didn't know her very well at the time.

But all of the artists were at the wedding. It was a big affair. It was wonderful.

At that time, the Modern Gallery was the front of the building; it later became a Chinese laundry when I was there. But it was a long, narrow room and it made a lovely little gallery. Ten artists got together and started a gallery there and I was one of the members, and we had changing exhibitions of the young artists. We danced in the gallery. We opened it right through. It opened into the stoneyard at the rear. The gallery you entered from Montgomery Street and the stoneyard from Hotaling Place. So it made quite a nice place with the big gallery for dancing after the wedding.

Harroun: It was called the Modern Gallery?

Cravath: It was called the Modern Gallery and I think there's some references to it. I had an exhibition there with Julius Pommer some time in the late '20s.

Teiser: [Referring to note.] 1923, this says, a joint show with Julius Pommer. Catherine found a date for it. Would it have been that early?

Harroun: I made a note from your scrapbook.

Cravath: Yes, [locating article in scrapbook] it was at the Modern Gallery. Yes, that was it, 1923. That was during the Montgomery Block period. I had quite a few drawings in that exhibition.

Teiser: Who were the other members of the Modern Gallery?
Cravath: Let's see. There was Julius Pommer, and Dorr Bothwell, and I think Marian Trace, and a chap named Rudolph Hess. I don't know what's happened to him. That's four people. And Ward Montague is five. Myself, and there must have been four others. Have I only named six? Another was Don Works.

Harroun: Ward Montague was--?

Cravath: A sculptor.

Harroun: And Marian Trace?

Cravath: She did painting. And you know Dorr Bothwell's work. And Rudolph Hess. He was a painter. And I think Forrest Brissey. I know Forrest Brissey showed there. Whether he was one of the original founders or not, I'm not sure. Otis Oldfield was one of our sponsors and backers, I remember. I mean, he wasn't one of the artists because this was a group of young artists. But there were about ten, and it may be that that was all there were for the founders.

We had continuing shows there. I think Adeline Kent belonged later. Whether she was one of the early ones, I don't know. Artists joined it if they had an exhibition, you see, so there were quite a few of them from time to time.

Teiser: Julius Pommer later did etchings, did he not?

Cravath: Yes, he did some etchings.

Teiser: What did he show with you?

Cravath: He showed some paintings and pastels and drawings. He was a very, very good artist and a remarkable person, and he earned his living selling automobile tires.

Harroun: Good grief!

Cravath: He was a Saturday, Sunday, holiday, night painter, but a very serious artist.

Harroun: I have a delightful little etching that Mildred Pommer gave me.

Cravath: Mildred, yes. Newell was her name before she married him.

Teiser: What did you show in that, then? You showed drawings and sculpture?
Cravath: I guess I showed some sculpture, not very much, because I showed some drawings and some pastels, and, well, I think some pieces of sculpture. I must have probably shown that red sandstone head at some time in the Modern Gallery. Well, I had several shows in the Modern Gallery. One was portraits in sculpture, but that was after I had moved from the Montgomery Block, and, no, that was another gallery later called the Art Center. That was a different one, but it was in the same block. That comes in later.

Harroun: You could walk through the Modern Gallery into the stoneyard?

Cravath: Into the stoneyard, yes, if it was open. It wasn't generally opened, you see, because that was Stackpole's working place, but on the occasion of the wedding it was opened up so that we danced in the gallery.

Teiser: Was it an evening wedding?

Cravath: Yes.

Harroun: Was Otis Oldfield teaching at the art school at that time?

Cravath: [Pauses to think.] I should have my glasses on. Otis came back from Europe in 1924, from France, and he was in Sacramento for a while. He came to San Francisco in '25 or '26 and he taught—well, his first teaching was the summer session of 1926, I think. He taught a summer class and then he taught at the art school after that.

Teiser: Ruth, you mentioned something, and Raymond Puccinelli mentioned it. It was in an earlier period. A little theatre. You said that you had met Walter Goldberg there.

Cravath: Oh, yes! That was the Players Club in San Francisco, and Reginald Travers was the director, and it was in the old church on Bush Street. There were two organizations using the same place. One was the Players Club and the other was the Children's Theatre, of which Mrs. John J. Cuddy was the director. She'd written some children's plays too; some of the plays that they gave were hers.

*See also pp. 84-85.
Dorothy and I worked for a while designing and executing costumes, or Dorothy did the designing and Willie Wise made them for the Children's Theatre. Raymond [Puccinelli] was one of the actors. He was the prince, I remember, and that's where Dorothy and Raymond met, at the Children's Theatre on Bush Street.

Dorothy and I not only did the work for the Children's Theatre, but we designed the sets and executed the sets for the Players Club, which was an adult group, and of that group Walter Goldberg was the property man. So, that's where we met him and that's where Dorothy met Raymond Puccinelli. This was before he was a sculptor. Parmer Fuller was one of the actors in that group. And Reginald Travers was the director.

Teiser: About when was that?
Cravath: That was in the late '20s.

PIERCE STREET STUDIOS

Teiser: How did you happen to move from the Montgomery Block? More space?
Cravath: Yes. Edith Hamlin had had this studio out at 1813 Pierce Street, which was then next door to the old people's home at Pierce and Pine. Yes. The house belonged to Dr. [Emmet] Rixford, the old man, Geneve Rixford Sargeant's father. She was a painter. This was the old family house, an old Victorian house, and in the back yard was this lovely studio, a nice wooden building which had been a studio, but I think it had been built for Mrs. Sargeant, or her sister, who was also a painter. Somehow or other, Edith was fortunate enough to fall heir to that.

Then Edith had to give it up. She was not well. So Marian and I just moved in, and I was there for a number of years. I was married while I was there. I don't just know what year I did give that up, but it was about 1930, I guess. I think I was there through the rest of the '20s, anyway.

There was a little garden area, and I cut stone there. The old people were next door. They'd be very interested, and there was this nice old Scotch woman who came over all excited when
Cravath: She heard the stone hammering going on. I had a fellow helping me roughing something out, and he sounded like a professional, and she said she heard a real "gr-r-ranite cutter," so she had to come over because her husband had been a stone carver in granite. There was a great eucalyptus tree there over the studio and I never could tell when it was raining because the eucalyptus tree would drip so from the fog, you know, and it sounded like it was rain. I used to stay all night there. We had a little, tiny sort of a kitchen effect. As I say, the '20s were partly in the Montgomery Block and partly there, in that studio.

TEACHING

Teiser: Looking back at this outline--you were teaching children's classes?

Cravath: Yes. I'll have to get my glasses here.

[Tape off briefly.]

Teiser: Let me put a note on this tape: the noise on the tape is the wind outside.

Cravath: And the rain.

Teiser: Beating against the windows. It's a very stormy day.

Cravath: [Laughter] It is indeed!

Well, now that I have my glasses, I see a reference to the Cravath School of Sculpture exhibit at the Paul Elder Gallery in August of 1926, and that was work from my adult class, including Jacques Schnier--he showed a beautiful figure called "Mt. Whitney"--and our children's classes, because Marian Trace and I had children's classes. We had children's classes at 1813 Pierce Street, and it may have been work from that class. I'm not sure. Oh, we had a summer class at Miss Paul's School on Broadway once, but for a number of years we had Saturday classes for children at different places. So this exhibit at Paul Elder's in 1926 was the work done in my class in the Montgomery Block, the adult class, plus a lot of the children's work.
Teiser: It was not your work?

Cravath: Not mine, no, no. This was the Cravath School of Sculpture, you see. [Laughter]

Teiser: That gallery at Paul Elder's--can you describe it?

Cravath: Oh, yes. You went into the old Paul Elder's on Post Street--wasn't it, Catherine?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: You walked right in and then there was this lovely stairway that came down, you know, parted. You went up both ways. There were books on the first floor and you went up to the second floor, where the gallery was. There was a balcony too, I believe, but at the front of the store, with windows over the street, was this nice--it was used for a gallery and it was used for dramatic readings and various things. It was sort of a little auditorium gallery. But it was a nice, warm, attractive, friendly place. Do you remember it?

Harroun: Yes, I do.

Cravath: And we were very fortunate to have that for the exhibition, I remember. Fred Rosher was in that class too. So, I mean, I had some good students, so it was an interesting exhibit, with Jacques Schnier's work too.

Teiser: You said that you had also adult classes.

Cravath: Yes. The adult class was on the fourth floor in the Montgomery Block and the children's class we had--well, we had the summer class at Miss Paul's School* that one summer, and I really don't remember, but I don't think I had children's classes in the Montgomery Block. I don't think that was considered a very suitable place for a children's class.

But when we moved to 1813 Pierce Street--and that's where we are now, aren't we? We're still in the '20s?

Teiser: Yes.

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*Rube Goldberg's two little boys, Tom and George, were in that class. R.C.
--then we had children's classes, which were very interesting. I still know some of the children that were in the class. Robert Appleton, who's an architect--well, he's a grandfather now. Robert was very interested in sculpture, and his wife Leslie. They were both--they were just children--in the class. And the daughter of James Mitchell, Lois Mitchell, was in the class, and I hear from her once in a while. It was an interesting group of children. And Jean Myers, who lives in San Francisco and has quite a family now, and her brother, Larry, who died as quite a young boy.

Well, we had this Saturday class for, oh, a number of years.

Did you enjoy teaching always?

Yes, yes, I did. I enjoyed teaching children in those days very much, but as I got older I think I became less patient, and several years ago I decided I would teach no more children or teen-agers, only adults that really wanted to do it, you know, because discipline is too much of a--you don't have to cope with it.

If you consider this an impertinent question, say so. But I gather you and all the rest of your contemporaries were just skimming by financially?

Oh, yes. Indeed, yes. That's very true. We were just skimming by and we'd have other jobs from time to time too. You know, I told you last time about working at Guggenheim's while I was going to art school. So this Saturday class was very important financially to Marian and me. But of course, we didn't have to pay big rents for studios, and we didn't have too much money, any of us.

But you didn't feel insecure? You never felt you were going to have to give up your career?

Well, I didn't feel insecure because I had parents then who were very kind. And Dorr Bothwell, I remember, had a monthly allowance from her father, her parents, you see. And Dorothy had the ranch down in the country where we could always go if we had to. [Laughter] There was some security, but it wasn't lavish.

I know that Squire and other artists who were young in the '20s and '30s were inclined to spend any amount of time doing things
Teiser: for other people, and they're still attuned more to spending time than money, to trade time or to trade this and that. I wondered if it were a necessity of life then that you helped your friends by giving them a hand--

Cravath: Well, there was a very good spirit that way and artists have always sort of liked to barter too. Oftentimes doctors would be happy to let artists barter, you see, for various services.

Teiser: That too, of course. I just think of a number of artists who are generous with their time--

Cravath: Well, I think artists don't have too much of--time is very precious to be working on your own stuff, but you don't measure the time you spend on things. And it's so interesting because the layman is always asking how long it takes to do things, and it always seems so irrelevant to me as an artist--but they do to this day: "How long did it take you to do that statue out there? How long did it take you to do this portrait?" I always feel like saying, "Well, what difference does it make whether it took ten minutes or ten months or ten years?" You know, I mean, when you're working the sense of time is not the main thing. That's why I think artists are willing to help each other because they're doing something they like to do.

Teiser: George Post says, when people ask him how long it took him to paint that, "Twenty years and forty-five minutes."

Cravath: Well, that's a good answer. That's a very good answer, yes. I'll remember that. I'll quote him. [Laughter] I'll give him credit for it.

Teiser: Did you have, in addition to regular students, private students?

Cravath: Yes, from time to time, but I don't really like to have just one person working privately because I'm sort of conscientious as a teacher and I think I maybe breathe down their necks too much. Over the years, as you know, I've had private classes. I still do, but mostly only once a week or something like that. When I was in the studio before I came up here, I had a night class once a week and a day class right together, so the studio was just disrupted once.

Teiser: And there were several people at a time?
Cravath: Yes, a group. I've always wanted to have at least four in a class. I mean, I don't mind a small class of four. People have talked me into letting them have a few private lessons, but I don't make a practice of it.

Teiser: I think there was some indication in your scrapbooks that you were giving some lectures also.

Cravath: Well, there may have been. I did give a lecture at Rudolph Schaeffer's school, one lecture years ago on contemporary sculpture, and that was in the '30s, I think. But I'm not a lecturer.

Teiser: That brings up Rudolph Schaeffer. When did you first know him?

Cravath: Well, that was in the '20s. Dorr Bothwell and Dorothy Wagner had worked with him. We helped him with a summer school once. I remember we all had tuition for jobs, for working with him, when he had a studio in the Ray Coyle building on Powell Street. So I've known him ever since the '30s. He taught at the art school.

Teiser: He taught at the California School of Fine Arts also?

Cravath: Yes, before he had his own school. When I first came out here, he was on the faculty there, I think.

Teiser: What was he teaching?

Cravath: Design. Always color and design.

Teiser: Raymond Puccinelli, when we talked with him, said that he had been very much influenced by not only what he learned from Schaeffer, but also his technique of teaching, which he found very fine. Did many of you feel that way?

Cravath: Oh, yes. I mean, I don't know about his technique of teaching, but he was a gifted teacher; he still is and he is still teaching, you know, and he's not young.

Teiser: Well, that polishes off your lecturing!

Cravath: No, I haven't done many lectures. I mean, I remember this one because I did a lot of preparation for it. Oh, I have talked informally to groups now and then, but I wouldn't call them
THE DECORATIVE ARTS SHOW AND OTHER EXHIBITIONS

Teiser: In your exhibits here [looking through notes] at the San Francisco Art Association, I guess you exhibited almost annually with them.

Cravath: Yes, I did for a number of years. The red sandstone head which won the first prize with Piazzoni. Then I noted in here that I won an honorable mention, I think, for that group, "The Rock and the Wave," in 1924.

Teiser: In 1927 you won the first prize for sculpture.

Cravath: Yes. You see, in those days there weren't as many women sculptors as there are now, so it was good publicity. You know, they'd take pictures, like the one picture of me with the figure that I showed. I remember how offended I was at the interview, because I didn't say I preferred men models, but they thought that would be the thing to say. So they asked me and they quoted me as saying I preferred men, and then the heading on the picture was, "She prefers men models," and I was sitting next to the statute of the--then we wore quite long skirts and things, and I remember they wanted to hike my skirts up, and I was quite annoyed with that. And the heading for the picture, "She prefers men models"--they'd put these words into my mouth when they asked me, because that's what they wanted me to say. But that was with the figure of a woman, which was, I think, the first show. I believe that was the 1924 exhibit.

Harroun: It was in 1924 and it was the 49th Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association and the quote is "the youngest artist to win honors, twenty-one year old student, Ruth Cravath."

Cravath: Yes, well, that was an honorable mention then, I guess, that year.

*Notre Dame College, Belmont

**See p. 30.
Harroun: "...pupil of Stackpole."

Cravath: Right, right.

Harroun: "...honorable mention for a woman's head."

Teiser: Ruth, you really were quite young to be doing such responsible things, weren't you, to be teaching and--?

Cravath: Yes, I think so, you know, in my twenties, because when Stackpole went to Europe then it was the very late '20s and I took his class at the art school, you see, and that's when Victor Arnautoff and [Zygmund] Sazevich were in the class and so forth. But it's because there weren't so many sculptors and I was fortunate; I was very fortunate.

Teiser: [Laughter] The Decorative Arts Show--does it belong in this period?

Cravath: Yes, it does belong in this period because we're still in the '20s. The Women Artists' founding belongs in here too. Because this Decorative Arts Show was a project of the San Francisco Women Artists. I'm pretty sure it was. It was at the Women's City Club. I showed, in a fountain in the center, this group, a boy and a girl, which--now let me think--it must have been maybe 1929, because I did that group right after I was married. You know the story of that, don't you?

Teiser: No.

Cravath: Well, I was working on this group. It was a memorial to Marian Randolph, who was Lee Randolph's first wife, who had died, and it was placed out on Wawona Street. It was a group in stone and it was a fountain; it was a little boy and a little girl back to back. I was working on that when I was pregnant, and I remember saying to somebody that I hoped it would have a prenatal influence; I'd like to have twins, a boy and a girl. And I did! [Laughter] So Dorothy couldn't believe it, you see. She wrote me a letter while I was in the hospital and said if she ever found herself in that state, she was going to flatly avoid all commissions to do processions and mob scenes! [Laughter] No, really! Nobody would believe it when I had twins, and a boy and a girl, because here were these two figures, a boy and a girl, and I had talked about it, you see. Of course, I didn't think I'd really be so fortunate, but that was quite--[laughter]. I still have that wonderful letter of Dorothy's.
Cravath: The group was the central figure in that Decorative Arts Show, so that was around 1929. It was done for the Junior League House out on Wawona, a temporary home for foster children. It was out there for years.

Teiser: Where is it now?

Cravath: Subsequently, the Junior League gave up this home and I don't know what it was used for. The last I heard of it, Martin Snipper, who was doing a survey of all the public works in the city, told me about it.* I think he wanted me to rescue it. I don't know what's happened to it, but I was not in a position to take it and I didn't. Where it is now, I don't know. I must ask Martin Snipper.

Well, this show at the Women's City Club was very well planned and well organized and, architecturally, there were units. Some very distinguished artists, like Kem Weber, had exhibits there. Different artists had these units, you see, and they designed furniture for rooms and it was a well put on show. And they had, down the center, this sort of a pool with a fountain thing, and that's where this little group of boy and girl was.

Teiser: How did they distinguish between decorative arts and fine arts-- or did they make any attempt to?

Cravath: Fine arts that was used in a garden or used, you know, as a part of a setting was decorative. That's how.

Teiser: Then paintings would be too?

Cravath: Yes, there were some paintings in the thing. Then there was furniture and different arrangements. I forget who designed the fountain--maybe Rudolph Schaeffer, because he was very much part of this. He worked on this.

Teiser: I think that Raymond Puccinelli said that he himself had done some furniture, was it?

Cravath: Some carving, yes.

Harroun: Wood carving.

Cravath: Did he have some in that show?

Harroun: Yes, and Dorothy had something in it too, according to your scrapbook, I think.

*"A Survey of Art Work in the City and County of San Francisco," Martin Scrippes, Director, Art Commission, 1975.
Cravath: Well, I think she did. I don't remember what she had. I know she worked on some wood carvings with Raymond too, because that's when they were married, you see, and they were working together. I know she did work for it. We all worked for it.

Teiser: Was it an influential exhibit? Did it have results?

Cravath: I don't know just how to answer that. I think probably it did have, yes.

[Pauses] I wish I could remember a little bit more clearly the individual artists participating. As I say, I remember Helen Forbes designed some furniture and had some there. And I remember, because Kem Weber was a "name" and a well known artist, that he and Rudolph Schaeffer, I think, had a unit in it.

But during that period—that in a way is a little bit tied up with the art deco. You remember there was this article a few months ago in California Living on art deco, and it was part of that period and that influence.

THE SAN FRANCISCO STOCK EXCHANGE

Cravath: Speaking of this exhibition and the art deco makes me think of the Stock Exchange, which comes into the end of this period, you see.

Teiser: Does it?

Cravath: Yes, about 1929 or '28, because when I gave this talk recently on the '30s to the docents at the Oakland Museum, I started it with the Stock Exchange and ended it with the Fair*—you know, that decade of the '30s. And that was very much a part of the Stock Exchange—you've seen the Stock Exchange Lunch Club?

Teiser: We have not and we want to see it.

*The Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939 and 1940.
Cravath: Well, I'll take you. Oh, yes, because there's art deco all over the place there. I mean, the carvings that we did. I carved three panels for it and Stackpole carved something and Diego Rivera has the fresco there, and the railings were designed by artists. And the murals in the dining room by Bob Howard. It is a wonderful example of that art deco period, which is the very end of the '20s, you see.

Harroun: Raymond said that he had done some furniture for it and he was thrilled that they had accepted it and people had liked it. He wondered if it was still there.

Cravath: Yes. I think it is. I mean, when Helen Oldfield and I conducted this tour of the docents, I didn't remember who had done all these things, so we had to do quite a bit of research to find out. At that time, we found out that Bob Howard had designed the stair railing, you see, and Michael Goodman, the young architect who was in Tim Pflueger's office at the time, designed part of it. I talked to Mike about it. So it was a very interesting collaboration of artist-craftsmen and fine artists working there with, of course, this big Diego.

Teiser: Whose concept was it?

Cravath: The architect, Timothy Pflueger, I think.

Teiser: Would you tell a little about that? Did he know all of you?

Cravath: Well, he knew several artists. He knew Stackpole very well.

The Stock Exchange is sort of important to me because, you know, the big carving, sculptures, outside were done by Stackpole and were designed in his stoneyard. They were carved there in place.

Teiser: They were not carved in the stoneyard?

Cravath: No. They were carved in place, the granite; but the marbles were made in the stoneyard. They were carved right there on the building, in place, these big granite things.

Harroun: And did a number of people work on those?

Cravath: Oh, yes. He had helpers, quite a few. I'm trying to think of who they were. I think George Meyer and Clifford Wight and,
Cravath: oh, a number of artists helped him working on it. As a matter of fact, Bob Howard made a very good movie of that. I showed that movie to the docents. He's given it to someone. Now, who has it now? Anyway, that movie is available and it is a very good movie.

Teiser: Do you admire those figures?

Cravath: Yes, I do. I like them.

Harroun: Did you work on them youself?

Cravath: No, no, I didn't. (The compressor that I have in the basement here was used for that.)

Harroun: But you have panels inside?

Cravath: Inside of the Stock Exchange, yes.

Teiser: What are they?

Cravath: Well, just outside of the bar on the tenth floor--you see, the tenth and eleventh floor is the Stock Exchange. The best looking one of mine is a barmaid, just a relief of a girl with a tray and some glasses, and then on the eleventh floor around the corner I have two, a man and a woman. He's climbing a ladder. I didn't realize that they were all supposed to be sports. Somehow or other, the theme hadn't gotten across to me [laughter]. And I designed this woman in a kitchen stirring up something, with a cat at her feet. The man climbing up the ladder with something was around the corner. They were laborers, but Tim seemed to like them. It was okay with Tim Pflueger, although the other people there are sportsmen. [Laughter]

Harroun: [Laughter] But you had the barmaid.

Cravath: Yes, I did have the barmaid. Yes, that was on the tenth floor, that was a smaller panel.

Teiser: What material are they, Ruth?

Cravath: Travertine. I think they were Roman travertine. There was a lot of carving in travertine by various sculptors. Addie Kent did two panels like I did. I don't know whether she has one on the tenth floor or whether she did just the two. And Bob
Cravath: Howard and Stackpole did one. Well, it's a long time ago. I'll have to look it up and see.*

Teiser: Were you all paid well? Was that a big windfall?

Cravath: I think it was. I don't remember what we were paid, but we were paid.

It was the beginning of the exciting '30s when there was so much going on, you know, for the artists, and the frescoes and so forth.

Teiser: One artist I wanted to ask you about is Hagedorn.

Cravath: Yes. Hagedorn's very active period belongs to the '20s and early '30s. He's a wonderful draftsman, and he loves to draw from the nude and still does. He was a very modern, avant garde draftsman in those times, but he sort of hasn't changed much. I mean, that was his period, the late '20s and '30s.

Teiser: I didn't know he was still active.

Cravath: Well, he's not exhibiting that I know of, but he's still drawing.

Teiser: What does he draw?

Cravath: Draws from the nude, draws and draws and draws and draws, and he did paintings too. He used to organize the groups at my studio. He got the models and he cut the firewood and he took all the responsibility. We had a drawing group one night a week at 716 Montgomery Street for years and Hagedorn took the whole responsibility. He was a good friend of mine, is a good friend of mine.

Teiser: What is his first name?


*See also pp. 126-127 and other references to the San Francisco Stock Exchange as indexed.
THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ARTISTS

Teiser: How about the San Francisco Society of Women Artists? You said you were a founding member.

Cravath: Yes, I am a charter member, and it was an outgrowth of something called the Sketch Club, which had been an organization of lady artists. I think the Sketch Club sort of hadn't been operating for a number of years. Miss Treat, Eleanor Treat, and a group of the older artists decided that the women should be organized, that there should be another organization of women artists.

So, a meeting was called in Evelyn Almond Withrow's attic studio. She was a large lady, a painter, and not at all young. I remember I went to this meeting. Dorothy and I went. This was in the '20s, you see, so we were all young then. I remember getting on the California Street car, Dorothy and I, and we met Anne Dodge Bailhache, who was very active on the art scene for a number of years, and she was going. Well, she didn't know any of these people. We all found we were going to the same place and it was a large attic studio and a lot of strange ladies, most of them older. I think Dorr was there, but I'm not sure. She may not have gone to that meeting. But Dorothy and I were the youngest. We were just the youngsters, you see. The others were all old and impressive. And that was the founding of the San Francisco Women Artists, which still exists.

Harroun: You say it was an outgrowth of the Sketch Club?

Cravath: Of the Sketch Club. I mean, the people who had been in the Sketch Club were there; they were the older members.

Teiser: Why did they think they needed an organization? Do you remember?

Cravath: Well, I guess the Bohemian Club had just men artists. Did you mean just the women artists, or any kind of an art organization?

Teiser: No, why women? Why a separate one for women?

Cravath: Well, I think, perhaps partly it was a balance of the Bohemian Club, which was just men. The Sketch Club had been just women and there had been sort of a solidarity about it, I guess. I remember Addie Kent belonged to it originally and then she resigned because it was the Women Artists, just women. But,
Cravath: after all, you make various divisions and I never could see why not [laughter] have just women. I mean, there was the Art Association, which was both men and women, and the Bohemian Club, which was just men. And the Women Artists have always been a very civically minded group, I think, and not petty, or less so than some of the men's organizations; I mean, broader.

Harroun: The Women Artists have had annual exhibits, haven't they?

Cravath: Well, they did for years and years and years and years. And as long as the museums had group shows, the Art Association always had an annual. Well, then it got so they divided it up and they'd have an annual sculpture and drawing, and now, as far as I'm concerned, it doesn't really exist as an organization. I mean, there is the Art Institute,* but the annuals stopped partly because the museums lost interest in large group shows like this, you see, organization shows.

Teiser: Well, the Women Artists' goal was, I suppose, to have such a show?

Cravath: Right, right. To have exhibitions. And that's why they had this unique interest in the decorative arts too, which is a natural thing for women--weavers and potters and so forth. And for years in their annual shows the decorative arts and the painting and the sculpture and drawing was all together, you see; one big presentation.

Teiser: Did the women feel they didn't get a fair shake in the San Francisco Art Association?

Cravath: No, no. I don't think there was ever any feeling of discrimination that way. I mean, maybe some individual artists, but that was not the reason for the organization's being founded. It was to make opportunities for women to exhibit, you know, professional women, and they always set very high standards.

Teiser: You said that they were civic minded. What sort of things did they do?

Cravath: Well, I'm thinking of the Decorative Arts Show that they put on,

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*The California School of Fine Arts was re-named the San Francisco Art Institute in 1961.
Cravath: which was not just open to members, you see. The Women Artists' idea was to promote art in the community, which was also the idea of the Art Association, the same sort of idea. When I say "civically minded," I mean presentations for the community. I mean, they never got to be, as I knew them, at all petty or small in any way. It's a good outfit.

Teiser: Were there certain people in it who led it?

Cravath: Well, Helen Forbes, I think, was second president. I think Miss Withrow was the first one, and then Helen Forbes was a very active president. She was a leader. Let's see. At that time too there were some lay members who were interested in art and promoting art and they were invaluable members. Mrs. A.L. Lengfeld, I remember, was on the board, and we even had a president who was the wife of a doctor, Mrs. [Joseph] Fife, and this was fine because that took the burden of organization off of the artists, you see, because they were people who believed in art in the community. I think in latter years they've all been artists who've been president.

Teiser: Are you still active in it?

Cravath: I'm not really active in it, no. I still belong; I still pay my dues.

Harroun: But it's still an active organization?

Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: What does it do now that it doesn't have group shows?

Cravath: Well, it organizes various shows at various places, like at the Zellerbach Building it has a show, and then sometimes at the Kaiser Building in Oakland, and they have shows of crafts and photography. They have a number of shows annually of groups within the organization.

Teiser: Do they give scholarships or anything of that sort to students?

Cravath: No, but they have a number of prizes that they give.

Teiser: To people within their organization?

Cravath: To any worthy artist in the organization. That's what I mean about not being personal about it. I think they have from time
Cravath: to time given scholarships. I know that when I was teaching the children's class at the art school I persuaded them to give some scholarships to youngsters, young people, or teenagers who were very good students--scholarships to the art school. Yes, they did give a few of those. I mean, that would be a logical organization to appeal to for that sort of thing.

THE 1920s: OTHER MATTERS

Teiser: As you yourself exhibited more, did you gather up more commissions, up until the '30s?

Cravath: Well, there never were too many commissions in those years. There was this one that was in the Decorative Arts Show, and then the next commission that I had, which I worked on when the children were tiny babies, was the three figures for the Emanu-El Sisterhood,* and that was given by Mrs. [Joseph] Ehrman. It was a fountain. It's still there in the court, in Tennessee marble. That was in the '29-'30 period. There were three figures. Oh, it was a group about five feet high and then there was a basin on top. I did that at the 1813 Pierce Street studio, where I did also the two children. And I don't remember what was the next commission.

Teiser: Did your marriage change your career--except for the fact that you must have had to take a little time out when you had the twins?

Cravath: No. I was very lucky. I mean, the misfortune of some people was--it was during the Depression when the children were little, and so one could get help so easily for so little, whereas nowadays you wouldn't be able to afford it. But just to give someone a home and a job, they'd just come and beg you to work for twenty-five dollars a month and board and room. I didn't quite have the nerve to pay quite that little, but I was able to have help because we could afford it. So, that was very helpful. Young mother artists nowadays have a more difficult problem.

Teiser: Let's put down the vital statistics: the name of your husband and the names of your children.

*The building is now the Zen Center for Study and Meditation, Page and Laguna Streets.
Cravath: Yes. My husband was Sam Bell Wakefield III, and the twins were Elizabeth and Sam Bell Wakefield IV.

Teiser: Elizabeth known as Beth.

Cravath: Beth, yes.

Teiser: And they were born--

Cravath: They were born on December 11, 1928.

Harroun: To go back, you were married in Berkeley?

Cravath: At the First Congregational Church, yes. I just took some of those clippings out of the thing last night. I thought maybe Sam would be interested in them--you know, the ones that weren't particularly concerned with my work.

I'm trying to think when I moved from the Pierce Street studio. The next studio after the Pierce Street studio was in the '30s. It was on Leavenworth Street. That's where I did your portrait, isn't it, Catherine?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: We had this flat. It was on a hillside, so there was this lower level which had a good wooden floor and it was a fine place. I built the studio there and had a little place to cut stone downstairs. (What was that? In the early '30s, I guess, the mid-'30s. I forget just how long I was on Pierce Street.) And there I did a number of things--the torso, which was a prize-winner, and which subsequently I sold to the Warren Epsteins, just since I've been up here.

Teiser: Is that the one that was in Catherine's garden on Buchanan Street for a time?

Cravath: Yes, dear, I should have told you.

Harroun: I didn't know that that was sold. It is a beautiful piece.

Cravath: Yes. And it has a very beautiful home in Woodside now by a swimming pool.

Harroun: Wonderful!
Cravath: And I did this mother and child, that's down here, also during the '30s in that Leavenworth Street studio—down in the stoneyard there. I mean, it was a nice little place to cut stone at the foot of the stairs and then the big studio inside was up above. And we had drawing groups there; that was enough space.

Teiser: This brings us to the end of this tape. So, let's explore the '30s the next session.

Cravath: Okay. Good.
Teiser: You just now were telling us that you'd gone through your scrapbooks and put them in order recently.

Cravath: Yes, thanks to you ladies. I was appalled at the disorder, and I trimmed off all the worn out newspaper stuff in the old scrapbook and took folders and I have a folder for the '20s and the '30s and the '40s and the '50s and the '60s and the '70s. So I feel grateful to you, and I'm embarrassed when I think of the people who looked through it before.

Teiser: In going through the material on the '20s, did you come across anything that you wanted to add to our discussion of last week?

Cravath: Well, let me take a look quick. [Pauses to look through folder.]

[Tape off briefly.]

One of my very first commissions when I was just practically an art student was to do a portrait for a bronze tablet, a memorial to Francis Drake Trosper, Judge Trosper, which is up in--let's see, where is it?--Cazadero. [Reading from article.] "The bronze bust of the dead jurist is the work of George Larson." This amused me because he was the one that got me to do it [laughter], so he took credit for it! I was very surprised when this came out! [Laughter]

Teiser: When was that, Ruth?

Cravath: That was 1924, so that was quite early. I only did the portrait. He designed the rest of it, I'm sure of that.

Teiser: The portrait's a relief, is it? In metal?
Cravath: It's a relief. Yes, it's in bronze. And it's near Cazadero. I think it's still there. I'd really forgotten about it until I looked at that--

Teiser: [Reading from article.] "Francis Drake Trosper, Justice of the Peace at Cazadero."

Cravath: It's at a corner or a crossroads and it's mounted, I believe, on a redwood tree or something. I've seen it once, but it was 1924, so I don't remember very well.

Teiser: Were you known by then as someone who could create a good likeness? Was that why you were chosen to do that?

Cravath: Well, I had done a number of portrait heads. I don't know how George Larsen, who apparently produced the tablet and the bronze work, designed the whole thing. I presume that to him the portrait was just a detail and he didn't want to undertake doing it. But I was somewhat surprised to see that he took credit.

Teiser: Who was he, Ruth?

Cravath: I have no idea. I think he might even have been a foundry man. I don't know. I mean, he was the one who was having it manufactured, or manufacturing it, or designing it, or something. But that was one of my very first commissions.

THE 1930s

Teiser: On to the '30s. They began, I guess, in bad times economically.

Cravath: Yes, the Depression.

Teiser: Were you affected by it particularly?

Cravath: No. My husband had a job in the bank* and that's when my children were babies. As a matter of fact, it was slightly beneficial to me because I was able to get domestic help for

*Wells Fargo Bank
Cravath: so little, which I think I mentioned before. It was almost embarrassing when people would beg you to work, and very nice people too, so I had somebody in residence, which made it possible for me to work, myself, which was not a proper situation economically for the community, but that's what the situation was.

Teiser: Did other artists, do you think, profit in similar ways? I'm sure that a lot of people look back with great pleasure in a way on the Depression years.

Cravath: Because of the WPA, yes, because, as you know, they paid twenty-four dollars a week, ninety-six dollars a month, for the artist's output, and this was enough to eat on, to live on, in the Depression. And the government acquired a lot of good art that way and it was to the advantage of the artists. I was not on WPA or FWA.

Teiser: Did you have friends who were on them?

Cravath: Yes, yes, I had a number of friends. As you know, Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli, subsequently my sister-in-law, and Helen Forbes did the magnificent murals at the Mother House at Fleishhacker Zoo,* so I was very intimately associated with watching that progress during the years. That was one of the early ones.

Teiser: Did you ever give them any advice?

Cravath: Yes, a little bit of advice to Helen Forbes about how to draw babies because I was an expert on that subject! [Laughter]

Teiser: But not to Dorothy about how to draw animals? [Laughter]

Cravath: No, indeed! No. [Laughter] I remember Helen Forbes' baby with a small head then, but I don't think she took my advice. [Laughter]

Teiser: We asked Dorothy, when we were interviewing her, about mural art in that period. She gave as a kind of joke a simple answer to the question of why there was an upsurge of mural art. She said because there was money, because it could be done for pay, and so people did become mural artists who weren't necessarily going to be before.

Cravath: Right.

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*Mother's House
Teiser: Is that true?

Cravath: Yes, I think it is. That, coupled with the fact that fresco painting was sort of developed in San Francisco; I mean, contemporary. I mean the San Francisco school, which you see evidence of in Coit Tower and many places. And it was taught at the art school. They taught fresco.

Teiser: Earlier?

Cravath: Yes, in the '20s, the late '20s. So, that was the foundation for it.

Teiser: Who was teaching then such painting?

Cravath: I think Ray Boynton taught fresco. I'm not sure, but I think he was the one that taught it. There are a number of murals--I hope they're still there--that have been in the wall there. Some of them have been covered up, of course, frescoes that were done by students in that period, because it was a great mural production period.

Teiser: In the art school?

Cravath: In the art school, yes. And then, of course, Diego Rivera did the fresco in the gallery there, which you've seen, the gallery at the art school. It was so realistically painted that you'd see Diego sitting up on the scaffold; you'd see two of them, himself and the fresco. It looked just like somebody sitting there. It was a little startling sometimes.

Teiser: Do you know when he first came here?

Cravath: I think that was it, as far as I know, to be commissioned to do that in the late '20s. Of course, he came later in the '30s.

Teiser: How did he happen to be commissioned to do that then?
Do you know who brought him here?

Cravath: I think Will Gerstle.* I'm not absolutely certain, but I think

*William Lewis Gerstle
Cravath: It was Will Gerstle who commissioned him. He was interested in the art school and he was president of the Art Association.

Teiser: What was he like, Will Gerstle?

Cravath: He was a small, dark man and very interested in the arts. He painted, himself, but he realized that he wasn't a very good painter, but he had a marvelous studio for years at 716 Montgomery Street. It was in the same building with Stackpole's studio, next door to Stackpole, and he would be at his office with Alaska Commercial in the morning, and he'd go to that studio every afternoon, I think, and paint. His daughter, Miriam Wornum, went to art school. I mean, the family were very interested in and supportive of art in San Francisco for years.

Teiser: I'm sure it was a key thing to bring Diego Rivera here.

Cravath: Yes, yes.

Teiser: Every artist that I've ever talked to seems to have been somewhat affected by it.

Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, I think that's one of the factors in making the San Francisco school of fresco, which I believe was well known all over the country, and which did develop in the '30s, and, of course, Diego having done three of them here. He did the one at the art school and the one in the Stock Exchange building. Did we talk about that last time? I think we did.

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: Whether he came to do the Stock Exchange and Gerstle got him to do the one at the art school, or vice versa, or Timothy Pflueger brought him, I don't know which came first, but they were about the same period.

As a matter of fact, speaking of the '30s, when a couple of years ago I was asked to give a talk to the docents of the Oakland Museum about the art of the '30s in the Bay Area, I began it with the Stock Exchange and ended it with the Exposition in 1939, because those were two very important events for the artists that involved many of the local artists. That was the decade, beginning, I would say, with the Stock Exchange, and ending with the Exposition.
Cravath: Timothy Pflueger, who was the architect of the Stock Exchange, was also the architect of the Court of the Pacific at the Fair, and he was always a friend of the artists. He was a great influence.

I noticed you asked* about people who were an influence in the art world and we've mentioned Rivera and we've mentioned Gerstle, and with that group comes Stackpole, of course. Stackpole had a studio right next to Gerstle's and Stackpole's stoneyard was sort of a center for all kinds of artistic politics. Stackpole didn't care to get too involved himself, but everybody would go down there and talk to him. And we should mention Gottardo Piazzoni in that group, because his studio was right next door. It was quite a meeting place, Stackpole's stoneyard, for the artists and the various projects—everybody would go and things were talked over there and so forth with Tim Pflueger.

There was a little tiny hole, do you remember, in the gate? It was a big gate that you opened for cars to come in, and then there was a little gate that you'd open for human beings to step through, and then there was a little tiny peekhole above that, so you could see who was there and whether you wanted to open the little gate and let them in or not. Ralph Stackpole used to call that the "architects' gate." [Laughter] And there is a picture in some of the publicity of Stackpole greeting Timothy Pflueger through that little gate. So Timothy was there many times.

Dr. [Leo] Eloesser and Ralph Stackpole together owned that building, you see. Dr. Eloesser was a great friend of the artists, a friend of Stackpole's.

Teiser: How did Dr. Eloesser happen to be interested in art? He was a practicing physician, was he not?

Cravath: He was a practicing physician and he was a violinist. He loved to play. He played in a quartet for years and, well, he was a friend of many of the artists—Helen Forbes and Stackpole—and through his interest in music, I suppose, he was very interested in art.

Teiser: Some artists I know would pay dentist and doctor bills with art. Did he accept that?

*In the outline.
Cravath: Yes, I imagine he did some barter, I think so. Dr. [W.L.] Rogers, I believe, was in his office and I think that both of them took care of many artists, so I'm sure there was quite a bit of barter going on.

Teiser: Dr. Eloesser was working as a full-time physician?

Cravath: Oh, yes, yes. He's a very well known physician and worked for international health organizations. He's living in Mexico now. He's not young, but he's still there.

Teiser: I guess I was thinking in terms also of patrons; I suppose Mr. Gerstle would be considered a patron of the arts.

Cravath: Yes, right.

Teiser: Were there others?

Cravath: Oh, yes.

ALBERT BENDER

Cravath: The most important patron of the arts of the '30s was Albert Bender.* Of course, he did a great deal for Mills College, as you know, and in books and literature and music. He was really the friend of the artists, although some people questioned his little method. He'd buy something from the artist and give it to the museum for the Bender Collection. Most artists were very happy to have work find a permanent home in the museum, you see. But he had just a flat rate; he paid a hundred dollars. Of course, it was up to the artist to choose something; he didn't have to give him an elaborate thing that was worth a couple of thousand dollars, but if he wanted to, it found a permanent home in the museum. So the Bender Collection was greatly enlarged by that, and naturally most artists would pick out something that they wanted to be represented by in the museum, so it would be something pretty well done. That's how they acquired my marble head of Spencer Macky and a dear little tempera head that Dorothy Puccinelli Cravath did of a Bolivian girl.**

*See also pp. 28-29.

**See also pp. 28-29.
Cravath: I'm going to jump right ahead into the late '60s or early '70s now, because it relates to this, and voice my protest at the auction that the San Francisco Museum gave at Butterfield's a few years ago, because they auctioned off quite a large part of the Bender Collection. I presume this is their right; they owned the things. But what they did that I think was inexcusable was they didn't notify the artists or the artists' families that they were going to be auctioned off. The artists all thought these things were forever at the museum, you see. I went and combed the thing very carefully. I got a catalogue and checked everything and I asked the widow of Moya del Pino and several people if they had been informed, because there were several of his paintings there. My sister-in-law was not informed. No one was given an opportunity and that's what I object to. I think it was inexcusable.

Harroun: Who was responsible for that?

Cravath: Maybe partly the women's board or the powers that be at the San Francisco Museum. They said they needed the space and so forth. Of course, they needed the money. But the least they could have done would have been to have written letters to either the survivors or the artists.

Teiser: It was not even given any public publicity in the newspapers, was it?

Cravath: I don't know because I don't read the newspapers.

Harroun: Well, I do, and it was not publicized.

Teiser: People did not know about it in advance, I think, in general.

Harroun: That's true.

Cravath: Yes. They had a catalogue printed and the sale was on for a number of days. I objected to Mary Keesling, who was on the women's board there, and she said, oh, well, they had other works by the artists; these were just the minor ones. But this was not true because they didn't have anything else of Dorothy's that I know of. I checked. And I'm sure that my head of Spencer Macky was just too heavy to move down there, so that's still at the museum. [Laughter]

Teiser: I knew someone who had a painting there and just by chance someone he knew bought it, but he didn't know about it in advance.
Cravath: Of course he didn't.

Teiser: He might have wanted to go and get it.

Cravath: Yes. Well, this is what I mean. I'm not sure whether this was before or after Otis Oldfield's death. I know Edith Hamlin bought from the museum some of Maynard Dixon's things. This had nothing to do with this auction. But the family often would be interested in--I mean, certainly they would want to have a chance to own it if it was no longer going to be housed at the museum. So, anyway, so much for that.

But dear Albert Bender. He helped a great many artists because a hundred dollars was a lot more in the '30s than it is now. That was a pretty nice thing, I think, the way he built it up and I think it was a stinky thing of the museum to break up the Bender Collection.

Teiser: Was he considered a very wealthy man?

Cravath: I guess he was. I don't know that he was enormously wealthy. He was in the insurance business and I think he made most of it. But he spent his money for art and music and books. He was very interested in books, you know. He was one of the outstanding patrons.

Teiser: What was he like?

Cravath: Oh, he had a wonderful sense of humor. Always on St. Patrick's Day, which was his birthday, there was a big party at his studio. Of course, he was Jewish, but he loved his St. Patrick's Day parties.

Teiser: What studio?

Cravath: Well, he lived at Post Street in the Studio Building [1369 Post Street]. Dorothy had a studio in that building at the same time. He had a very nice apartment there, and that was where the party was. At the time, a dancer--I can't remember her name*--had her studio on the first floor, you see, so the party would sort of spill over downstairs. It was lots of fun because people worked up skits, and he had a great sense of humor.

*Betsy Horst
Teiser: They worked up skits?

Cravath: Yes, for the party, of course, because it was a big event.

Teiser: What kind?

Cravath: Little dramas taking off on Bender and various things. It was very hilarious.

Teiser: All about him?

Cravath: Oh, yes. All about him. It was a very jolly event. It was a lot of fun.

Teiser: It must have brought together an awful lot of interesting people.

Cravath: It did, people interested in music and literature, not only the visual arts, and the patrons of art. Albert Bender's funeral was the most impressive one I've ever attended in San Francisco. It was at Temple Emanu-El and I think the mayor and all the dignitaries were pallbearers and the Temple was absolutely filled. It was really a great tribute to the man, most impressive.

Teiser: Had he helped artists in any other way than buying their works?

Cravath: I think he probably did privately, Ruth. I mean, I don't know. He did quite a bit for Mills College, I think. Oh, he gave the Anne Bremer Memorial Prizes at the Art Association. Anne Bremer was a painter who was before my day. She must have been before the '20s, I guess in the first decade of the century, a painter.* And she was his cousin, to whom he was very devoted, so he gave what was known as the Anne Bremer Memorial Prize, which was several hundred dollars, which was given each year at the Art Association annuals.

Teiser: Were there other such people, patrons that you know of?

Cravath: [Pauses] Well, let's see. I'm sure there were. My mind's a blank about it now.

Teiser: Were any people about who were notably buyers of art themselves?

*She died in 1923.
Cravath: Well, the Walter Haases have a beautiful collection.

Teiser: Of local people?

Cravath: Well, a few local people. Recently they gave these windows to the Temple Emanu-El, these big, enormous stained glass windows designed by Mark Adams. This was within the last few years, but they have a very beautiful collection in their home, which I have seen.

And, oh, there's a lot of people around the Bay Area who have collections and collect. There's Mrs. Gerstle Mack. She collected work of local artists, I know, in the '30s and '40s. She was very avant garde in her taste. I remember she had some of Hagedorn's work.* It think it was in the '30s that I went to her apartment. She was very much interested in local artists, but in the modern work, you know, very contemporary work. Yes, Mrs. Gerstle Mack.

Teiser: We've been interviewing both Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer Fleishhacker, and Mr. Fleishhacker said that when he was young he and his sister sat for a portrait in sculpture. Was that Stackpole, Catherine?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: The two of them and their dog. His story was that [laughter] it took so long to do it that the dog died and they had to replace him with another one. [Laughter]

Cravath: Mrs. J.B. Levison** was in my class for a number of years, when you were, Catherine. She has a portrait, a sketch that Stackpole did, of, I think, her children. Mrs. [Helen] Salz has something of Stackpole's. So Stackpole was commissioned by a number of the leaders of the Jewish community who had the wherewithall to do things. I know I've seen the Helen Salz sculpture by Stackpole, and also Mrs. [J.B.] Levison had one.

*See p. 63.

**Mortimer Fleishhacker's aunt.
Teiser: The influences--

Cravath: Well, I think, as far as the influences, Rivera and Stackpole--I mean, among the artists--were outstanding influences. And Albert Bender, who gave homes to the artists' work.

THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART

Cravath: And then, of course, the San Francisco Museum was opened in the mid-'30s with Dr. Grace [McCann] Morley as the director.

Teiser: When that was planned, did it create much stir in the community?

Cravath: Oh, yes. You see, there was a bit of confusion because it was originally thought that it would be under the auspices of, or a project of, the San Francisco Art Association, I think. And then there was some division between--I don't know the politics of it. I've never followed the art politics too carefully. But it was divided up so the San Francisco Museum of Art was a different organization, but it was closely affiliated with the Art Association. I mean, they were the artistic advisors of, you know, the taste and the procedure.

[Interruption for adjustment of tape recorder.]

Teiser: What were you about to say?

Cravath: I was about to say that Dorr Bothwell and I have had our voices recorded, and when I hear our voices we sound just alike, except that she has a different laugh. I mean, you can tell when she laughs. But there's the same quality recorded. Now, this doesn't sound like Dorr to me. We don't know what we sound like ourselves.

Well, as I said before, the art of the '30s is very important and exciting to me because I was in my thirties in the '30s and I knew so many of the artists and the artists' community was still small enough so we knew practically everybody. All the artists that worked in Coit Tower—that's a good catalogue because that was mural work, and most of it was done in that decade, I think, the frescoes and the temperas and the mural paintings.
Teiser: Before we go on to that let's go back to the museum. When it was finally opened in the mid-'30s, was everyone pleased?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Very much so. It opened with the Art Association Annual, I believe in 1935. You can check the date.* That was the opening and that was really a big event in the artists' community. My contribution was that--well, your friend, the torso that you had in your garden.**

Harroun: Oh, yes.

Cravath: That was exhibited in that. I had submitted another piece, "Mother and Child," which is here, and that was rejected. It was my first big rejection, I remember. I was pretty lucky about shows, and I was pretty crushed that that was rejected. [Laughter] I think it was as good as the torso.

Teiser: Dr. Grace McCann Morley gave the museum strong leadership, did she not?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Oh, definitely.

Teiser: Had she been here or was she brought here?

Cravath: She was married to Dr. Morley, who was a professor at the University, and I really don't know much about her personal history, how long she had been here.

Teiser: She knew the artists here?

Cravath: Well, not before that I know of, but we all got to know her as director of the museum, and I think she's the best known director the museum's had.***

Teiser: It was my impression that the museum was more interested in local contemporary art than most museums are. Is that correct?

*1935 is correct.

**See p. 68.

***See also Grace McCann Morley, Art, Artists, Museums and the San Francisco Museum of Art, a Regional Oral History Office interview completed in 1960.
Cravath: Yes, I think so, although the other museums are interested in local art quite a bit, but the San Francisco Museum has always featured contemporary art. The Legion of Honor and the de Young show some contemporary art, but they also show other periods, but the San Francisco Museum does not. Well, it stretches the point and shows the Impressionists, which are not any longer contemporary.

GROUP SHOWS AND GALLERIES

Teiser: My impression was that it gave artists here an opportunity to show their new work in a museum very quickly. Was that right?

Cravath: Right. And this was because of the group shows partly. You see, the San Francisco Art Association had its annual. Well, they were almost shown with fresh paint; the paint was still wet. So it gave the community a sort of a pretty good cross section of what was being done right then at the time. The San Francisco Society of Women Artists had their annuals there too, and that was a big annual to begin with because they had painting and sculpture and prints and decorative arts. You see, that was the unique thing about the Women Artists' show, the addition of the decorative arts. So there were these two big events in the year for the local artists. And I think it's rather sad—and I think that is one reason that the art community is sort of not so unified—that the museums then finally just gave up the idea of having big group shows; they just choose a few artists to show, so that this opportunity to show their peers and to show competitively and to see has been eliminated from the scene, which I think is rather too bad, but it's just a part of over-population, I guess. [Laughter]

Teiser: Do you think the fact that for many years Alfred Frankenstein of the Chronicle has objected to group shows because they are so hard to review—that's an oversimplification of what he has said—but do you think that had influence?

Cravath: It might have influenced the museums. I had never thought of it, but that could easily be the case because along with that was putting critics on juries. In the early days, the '20s and '30s, when I was first on juries for the Art Association Annual, there was usually a jury of five artists. We never had in those days museum directors or art critics. (You see there
are two people, the museum directors and the art critics, now
who are sought after.) It was judged by a jury of five of
their peers, you see, and the museum directors and the art
critics have had much more influence since then as they've
been jurors for group shows. And, of course, poor Frankenstein
still doesn't like the Art Festival. I think he has something
maybe...

I wonder if some people don't think, "Well, the Art Festival
is a great big group show that takes the place of annuals."

The Art Festival is not at all comparable to Art Association
shows that, first of all, are the work of members who are juried
to belong to the organization; I mean, they are supposed to be
professional artists, you see, to have achieved a certain
standard before they are members. However, I have to take this
back, because the Art Association Annuals were not exclusively
for members. I mean, any artist could submit. I had forgotten
that. That was one thing about the Women Artists, they had
to be members, but for the Art Association Annuals you didn't
have to be a member, but they were pretty strictly juried, you
see, and this is one way artists achieved professional standing,
being accepted in a big juried show like that. So now there
aren't as many opportunities. I mean, there's lots of exhibitions
and lots of shows, but it's quite different.

There were relatively few private galleries then compared to
now?

I would say so, yes, relatively few.

You mentioned that a group of you from the Art Association--

Yes, I was connected with two groups, first the Modern Gallery,
which was in the '20s, and then in the '30s was the Art Center,
which was also on Montgomery Street, and it was downtown. It
was an organized group of artists. It was 722 Montgomery on
the second floor, the Art Center, but that was a decade later
than the Modern Gallery, and then for a while they were downtown
on Sutter Street.

That was another artist-operated gallery?

Right, right. It was an organized group of artists. Harriet
Whedon was the director of that for many years. She was very
good. She was an artist, an older woman, and a very good artist.
Cravath: I should mention Harriet Whedon as an influence in the '30s because of her work in the Art Center.

Harroun: Did she establish the Art Center?

Cravath: No. It was a group, but she was the director for a while and then we had several other people when she left. She went back to New York and other people were the directors.

In the Modern Gallery, we babysat it ourselves, you see, but the Art Center, we tried to have somebody who would take care of it all the time.

Teiser: Did it do anything but have shows, the Art Center?

Cravath: No. It was an exhibiting organization.

We haven't talked about the Beaux Arts Gallery. That's very important. I should have mentioned the Beaux Arts Gallery in the '20s. It was at Maiden Lane. Was it 116 Maiden Lane, which is now the Mayfair Restaurant, where you go to lunch? I think it was in that same place on that floor, and Beatrice Judd Ryan was the director during its entire existence, and it was there for a number of years. I remember the previews were very famous for having coffee, demitasse with a marshmallow. That was what you always had at the preview of the Beaux Arts Gallery, a demitasse coffee with a marshmallow. [Laughter] I think that must have been during Prohibition, wasn't it? Yes, I think that was the hospitality that was offered.

Well, the Beaux Arts then moved to 166 Geary Street, across from the City of Paris, and Beatrice Ryan was still the director. They were there for a number of years and they had a little more space there and showed many of the important artists. Otis Oldfield had a show there when he first came back from France. I remember seeing his first work there.

Well, we should have mentioned her among the people of influence, with Bender and Stackpole. I mean, we're still talking about people in the '30s.

Teiser: Was she interested primarily in local art?

Cravath: Yes, yes, right.

Teiser: I suppose in all of these galleries they gave exhibits and then they sold.
Cravath: Right.

Teiser: For a commission?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: When you had an artists' gallery, did you take just enough commission to pay for the upkeep, or how did you work it?

Cravath: Well, the way we kept it up was by our dues. I mean, artists that belonged paid so much and they had an exhibition. I don't remember about the commissions from the sales. It may have been that the gallery took commissions.

Teiser: How about Mrs. Ryan?

Cravath: She charged a commission. I mean, it was a regular gallery and she worked very hard. She had a show of Diego Rivera's. I would say that was the top gallery, private gallery, for years.

Teiser: Let me turn the tape over.

Cravath: Okay.

Teiser: You were saying Mrs. Ryan was your very good friend, and Catherine reminded you that you have a portrait of her.

Cravath: Yes, I painted a portrait of Mrs. Ryan. The time that I painted it was when she was the director of the Rotunda Gallery in the City of Paris. It was after the days of the Beaux Arts. We might as well finish our little sketch of Mrs. Ryan, even though it takes us into the '40s. She gave up the Beaux Arts Gallery on 166 Geary and she worked for the Fair,* the art-in-action group, she and Helen Bruton. She had a full time job with the Fair and she organized, she and Helen, the art-in-action part of the Exposition. That was mostly in 1940, I believe. I'm not sure whether they had the art-in-action in '39 or not, but in 1940 I finished the horse's head there with the public looking on.

After the Fair, she came right to the City of Paris, and until the time of her retirement she directed the Rotunda Gallery

*Golden Gate International Exposition. See also other references to the Exposition as indexed.
Cravath: on the fifth floor of the City of Paris, which you remember very well.

Teiser: Was that the personal interest of the owners of the City of Paris that brought her there?

Cravath: I think so--Verdier.* This had been quite prominent at the Fair, you see, so it was a natural thing to maintain this. Well, when she first went over to the City of Paris, I think they had probably a little art-in-action center, but then when the gallery was moved to the rotunda, it was just an exhibiting gallery, because there was not room to have workshops there.

It was at that time that I painted the portrait of her. I had the Rotunda Gallery over her shoulder, and she wore the most fabulous hats. Do you remember?

Harroun: Oh, yes.

Cravath: She always wore very, very colorful hats and she always had a bunch of violets in her hair. She had this brilliant auburn hair, very, very straight. She had a beautiful head, so she could pull it back tight, and then there was a bunch of violets in her hair. So I painted the hat transparent where it went over her head, but it was a portrait of a real hat she had, a great green hat with a red plume on it, and that was lots of fun.

Teiser: A gallery owner like that who knows people here, does she, for instance, encourage people to create?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Oh, definitely! To have an exhibition is the greatest inducement to work because many artists work better if they have a deadline. Yes, it really is. That is one reason why so many artists want to have shows, because it keeps them working. Some of us are quite lazy; really, you see. But an exhibition makes it necessary to work.

Teiser: Did she go actively into the art community to ask for shows, or did they come to her?

Cravath: Both. I mean, they would go to her, or if she was aware of somebody who wanted to have a show she would ask the artist. It was a two-way thing.

*Paul Verdier
Teiser: How could a gallery owner like that turn down artists who come to her without insulting them?

Cravath: Well, that was not a problem to her! [Laughter] She was a dear person, but she could be very short with you. Yes, she was famous for being a bit brusque and making enemies that way, but everybody who knew her, really knew her, realized that she was really a very kind and generous person and really had the interests of the artist at heart. But we all got barked at now and then! [Laughter] But as I say, she really was the artists' friend and we all knew it, you see.

I'll never forget when I had a show there, a show of portraits, and I took these things in and she had had someone in the City of Paris make frames for a couple of relief portraits and she wanted me to see them. She said, "Would you come back at such-and-such a time?" I was downtown. I didn't have enough errands to really stay, but it was to be back in forty-five minutes or something, so since she'd asked me I thought it was kind and gracious to come back and show interest. So I got back there and she looked at me and she said, "I haven't time to talk to you now." [Laughter] But I saw the frames and they were all right. That was good.

Teiser: [Laughter] I remember that there she didn't serve coffee with marshmallows, but she served sherry.

Cravath: We had sherry and a rosé wine. I think the first time I ever had rosé wine was from Verdier's, but that was after Prohibition.

Teiser: Were there other galleries then during that period where one could show, or were those the main ones that you have discussed?

Cravath: Oh, I think there have always been galleries. There's Maxwell's Gallery. Maxwell's has been operating for years and years and years. I don't know much about Maxwell, really, except that he's still there. Let's see. We haven't come to the founding of the Labaudt Gallery, have we?

Teiser: When was that started?

Cravath: Well, it was after the war. Lucien Labaudt was killed in the war. I mean, he was flying; he wasn't in combat service, but he was doing sketches and his plane went down, so the Labaudt Gallery is a memorial to him. That is a gallery that's still operating and is absolutely dedicated to the memory of Lucien.
Cravath: and to artists, and Marcel [Labaudt] makes a great point of showing the work of young artists, undiscovered artists. She will show older artists too. She's a wonderful woman and she's maintained that.

I remember when it was founded a group of us got together—Stackpole and some of the older artists at the time—and talked about it. It was a very interesting project. And to this time, in the middle of August she opens her season with a show of Lucien's work. She takes a little vacation in the summer and always her season opens as near the fifteenth of August as possible with a show of Lucien's paintings.

Teiser: During the '30s, were the galleries of the de Young and the Legion open to many young artists?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. Dorothy Puccinelli had a magnificent show of large drawings at the Legion of Honor in I think it was 1933, these great scrolls which were animal drawings that she had done at the time that she was working for the Mother's House at the Zoo.* It was a stunning show.

Teiser: This was under Thomas Carr Howe?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. He was the director then.

Teiser: And he was aware of contemporary local people?

Cravath: Yes, yes. Oh, very much so.

Teiser: Was the de Young less so?

Cravath: Well, in the period of the '30s, I don't know that it was less so. The de Young, because they had Elizabeth Moses there—of course, she may not have been there in the '30s, but she was very much interested in the decorative arts and they have always had shows of pottery and ceramics and decorative art. I think they have had more of that type of thing than the Legion of Honor. But now, as you know, they have prints and paintings and everything, the de Young.

*These were actually done before the murals at the Mother's House. See Dorothy W.P. Cravath interview, pp. 10-11.
THE COIT TOWER MURALS

Teiser: [Referring to outline of suggested subjects for interview.] "Public art projects." Do you want to start with Coit Tower and talk about the people involved in that?

Cravath: Yes, we could do that. We did cover the Stock Exchange, didn't we?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: That was the first time when a group of artists had worked on a single project--I mean, a single area--that I know of. Now you want to talk about the Coit Tower.

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: Well, I hate to try to mention the names of the artists because I'm sure I'll leave some of them out.

Teiser: They're a matter of record. You don't need to be concerned about that. But if you could discuss it in terms of those that you do remember and the work as it went on--

Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, as you know, the frescoes around the first floor are the only ones that you can see now. You look in through the glass windows. Because of vandalism, they've had to close off the stairway. But there are several very magnificent ones that you can look at through the windows, including Maxine Albro's, which is the one that faces the east, and she has fruits and gardeners and vegetables. And you will see some portraits of Parker Hall, whom she later married, working. It's a flowery thing; it's very like Maxine's work. And then opposite that, facing--

Teiser: Tell a little about her, will you?

Cravath: Yes. She was in my class at the art school--a very colorful woman, a remarkable artist, and a lovely person. She traveled quite a bit. She went to Mexico. Her work is beautifully done and very decorative and I guess one might say, if there is such a thing, sort of feminine. Not that I think work is masculine or feminine; I don't think you can always tell whether a thing is done by a man or a woman, but I think you would naturally think that hers was done by a woman and, as I say, had a very great sense of design and color.
Cravath: She married Parker Hall, who was also in art school with me. He was in the sculpture class. He was a violinist too and they lived for many years in Carmel. She died several years ago.

Teiser: Did she continue working throughout her life?

Cravath: Yes, yes. And when Carmel started an art commission, she was on the art commission.

Teiser: Did she continue to work in fresco?

Cravath: Oh, I think not. She painted; she just decorated everything, painted everything, and did lots of drawings. She did a fresco at the San Francisco State College; she did a nice decoration there.

Teiser: What would be the main body of her work?

Cravath: It's painting. It would be painting and drawing. Well, as I say, while everybody was doing murals, she did these murals, but the last decade or so of her life, I think she was just painting.

Teiser: Did her husband continue?

Cravath: Not so much. He did a little bit, but not so much. And, I don't know how active she really was then. They traveled quite a bit. They would go to Mexico.

Teiser: Was he an artist? Was that his career?

Cravath: Yes. He didn't work a great deal, but I think it was his career, and, as I said, he also was a violinist. He was a member of the Bohemian Club as a musician years ago.

Teiser: Well, then, I stopped you because you were about to go on to the Coit Tower mural opposite hers.

Cravath: Oh, yes. Maxine's faces the east, and facing the west, absolutely opposite on the other side of the building, is Stackpole's fresco. Then, to the south, is Victor Arnautoff's, which is full of activity, like newspaper clippings of the era.

Teiser: Tell about Victor Arnautoff.
Cravath: Victor Arnautoff came here in the '20s. He was a White Russian. He had been in the army and had gone to China, Japan—you know, escaped—and he was married. They came to this country. I think they had three sons; one of them was Vas [Vasily] Arnautoff, who lived in my house for a number of years, and then Michael, and then Jake, who was born in Mexico while Victor was down there working with Diego Rivera.

When Victor first came, he was in my sculpture class at the California School of Fine Arts. That was right when the school first opened on the hill, where it now is (called the Art Institute). And then Victor became a very capable and excellent mural artist working in fresco. He did quite a few frescoes in addition to the one in the Coit Tower, but this was very much of the period; as I say, it's like reading newspapers of that period to see it. And all the people that we know, many of the artists, appear in his fresco.

He did quite a few portrait frescoes, shall we say. He got us all to pose for one that he was doing in his studio on Washington Street, and I don't know what ever happened to that fresco.

Teiser: Was he ideologically in tune with Diego Rivera? Was he a liberal?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. Yes, very liberal. And he was on the faculty of Stanford University, as you know, for many, many years, as a matter of fact up until his retirement. His wife died tragically. There was an accident. They were walking in Colma, where they lived, and there are no sidewalks there. This drunken driver just went right into her. She was in the hospital for some time, seriously hurt, and we thought she was recovering. It seemed to be that she was, but suddenly she died of an embolism or something. It was very tragic.

Victor then was quite lost and he went back to Russia. As his daughter-in-law said, he never really felt at home in this country. Lydia spoke perfect English, his wife, and he said to me once that Lydia made English out of his letters. He would have stayed here because of the family, the three sons, you see, who all live here; I mean, if she had lived they would have stayed.
Teiser: Isn't that unusual for a White Russian to go back?
Cravath: Yes, to be able to go back. He's very much in sympathy with current Russia and he's had commissions and exhibitions and he married a Russian woman who's an art critic and apparently it's a very happy arrangement for him.
Teiser: Where is most of his work in the United States?
Cravath: Well, it's in collections, some of the museum collections, and, of course, his sons have some. Vas has some. I don't know whether there's any down at Stanford. Probably they have some of his work.
Teiser: He seems an unlikely artist to have taught at Stanford.
Cravath: Yes. [Laughter] His work was never abstract or avant garde. It was very vigorous representational work, so his work was very much attuned to the social work of the '30s, you see, when everybody was doing something that was a cause in social work, and that was the character of Victor's work always.
Teiser: How did Stackpole feel in that milieu, in that psychological milieu?
Cravath: I think quite comfortable. [Laughter]
Harroun: I hadn't realized that he was a painter as well.
Cravath: Well, really, all sculptors do some painting and vice versa, like Piazzoni doing that beautiful sculptured head that he won the prize for, you see. Of course, he was primarily a painter and a mural painter, but not in fresco; I mean, the old fashioned kind--you know his work in the library?
Teiser: Yes. Well, to continue in Coit Tower--I'm using Coit Tower, I suppose, as a kind of biographical framework, asking you about the people you knew.
Cravath: Yes, yes. Well, now we've mentioned the three big areas. Then, toward the north, on the north side, right next to the men's washroom, is one of the nicest ones there, done by John Langley Howard, and one of the most mutilated and most vulnerable because of its location. I noticed that they've had to put plywood over it. I mean it's only partly visible.
Cravath: Then there are others in the corners--Clifford Wight--panels, single panels, and I'm not going to try to name all the artists.

Teiser: John Langley Howard is still, of course, active.

Cravath: Yes, he lives right across the street from me here and his wife, Blanche Phillips Howard, is a sculptor and they are currently having an exhibition at the Bank of America Building in the gallery downstairs--I haven't seen it--which opened last Saturday. He's working all the time very hard.

Teiser: He's had a very long career, hasn't he?

Cravath: Very long, yes. He's Robert Howard's younger brother.

Teiser: He's always been a painter?

Cravath: Always been a painter, yes, and a printmaker.

Teiser: Has he also done other frescoes?

Cravath: I'm not sure how many frescoes he's done. The only one I'm familiar with is the one in the Coit Tower. But for many years he was working for Fortune magazine in New York, doing illustrating for Fortune. He's a very, very skillful draftsman.

Teiser: Does his mural at Coit Tower have social implications too?

Cravath: Yes, that's the period; it does. He went through that period with his work, you know, but now he's just painting landscapes and--I mean it's an entirely different attitude. But that was when his work had a social message. Well, practically all the things there in the Coit Tower did. Otis Oldfield has an oil painting there.

Except Labaudt's mural on the stairway, you know, down Powell Street, which we can't see, the things that we've talked about so far you can peer in from the outside and see now. But you're not permitted to get inside and walk up or down the stairway. The stairway is [a depiction of] coming down Powell Street, and he has lots of people that we know; the Oldfield family and the children and many of the artists are in that, walking down Powell Street. It's very cleverly done I think.
Cravath: And then, up on the landing above the stairway, there's a little room that is quite separate in the corner, and there is Jane Berlandina's, because that's her style. Jane Berlandina was the wife of Henry Howard, the architect. You see, the four Howard boys were John Langley Howard, the painter, the youngest one; Robert Howard, the sculptor; Henry Howard, the architect; and Charles Howard, who's a painter.

Teiser: He lives in England?

Cravath: Well, he did live in England, but he and his wife, Madge Knight, have been living in Italy. One of the Howards married an English artist/painter; that's Charles Howard. And Henry Howard married a French woman painter, Jane Berlandina. Robert Howard married an American woman sculptor, Adeline Kent. And Langley Howard's first wife was not an artist. I guess the Howards must marry artists because that marriage didn't last and now he's married to an American woman sculptor. It's very interesting.

I hear that Madge Knight recently died in Italy. Jane Berlandina is dead and so is Henry Howard.

Then Edith Hamlin has some work on the second floor there, and Edith Hamlin is here in San Francisco now. I don't know all the artists there, but, as you say, it's on the record.

Teiser: Edith Hamlin's subjects---

Cravath: --were animals, as I remember, some deer and so forth.

Teiser: Do you know anything of how it was decided who would do what?

Cravath: I think it was a WPA project. So I don't know how they got their assignments, but I think the administrators probably were WPA, the ones who assigned the places.

Teiser: I wondered if the artists themselves had any say in what kind of things---

Cravath: Probably, probably. They usually do, yes. I imagine they chose the subjects. I'm sure they did. I'll tell you who could tell you all about it is Helen Oldfield, because she was living up on Telegraph Hill at the time and was very close to it.
OTHER MURALS OF THE 1930s

Cravath: She, incidentally, has a very good memory. She helped me on the tour that we took. A year after I had spoken to the docents at the Oakland Museum, they asked me to take them on a tour to see all these murals. We started out with the Stock Exchange and we went to Coit Tower. We got special permission to go in there, and we went out to City College and saw Diego's. We went out to the beach and saw Lucien Labaudt's at the Beach Chalet. We had lunch at the Mother's House at the Zoo and saw Helen Forbes' and Dorothy's frescoes.

Well, Helen was invaluable on that trip because she remembered so much at the Coit Tower and various places. We took Madame Labaudt with us and, oh, they were fascinated to hear her talk when we got to the Beach Chalet.

We didn't go to the art school. You can't do everything. But it was a full day. Oh, and we wound up at the George Washington High School where Sargent Johnson did the great sculptured wall. Oh, and that was my victory on the Art Commission. I must tell you about that. Well, yes, that was 1937. We're up to my appointment to the Art Commission.

In the library at George Washington High School there are frescoes. At one end it's Ralph Stackpole's, and I can't remember whose mural was in the other end. But the entrance is Victor Arnautoff's. When you asked me whether Victor had other things, I'd forgotten this at the time, you see.

Teiser: These were WPA also?

Cravath: Yes, and this was historic: George Washington High School, so it was the history of George Washington.

There was great controversy, as you well may remember, because you read the newspapers, a few years ago. The black students were getting very excited about them because, of course, the black people were slaves and Arnautoff painted them as slaves. They were handsome men. But the black students got excited about it. They had a very skillful principal out there, so she saved the frescoes, but some of them were covered for a while, and it all blew over. But I remember going out with the president of Artists' Equity to a meeting out there. We were trying to defend the things, and Henri Marie-Rose was magnificent.
Cravath: Of course, he has some black blood, as you know, and he talked about slavery--they'd been slaves, the Greeks were slaves, you know--I mean, he just said just the right things, but they didn't listen to anything.

I was going to get up and talk about Sargent Johnson's big carvings, because he was a black man, but it didn't do any good. Ruth Asawa was there and they wouldn't listen to her because she represented a minority. She told about having to be evacuated at the time of the war; but there was nobody but the black people; they wouldn't listen. They were very irrational.

Harroun: The black students?

Cravath: Yes, and some outsiders that came in. We were having a meeting with them, you see. Well, they had Ruth Asawa from the Art Commission and a couple of members of Equity went and Vasily Arnautoff was wonderful. He spoke about his father's work. Of all people, Victor was so liberal! Of course, he'd just come to this country when he painted his mural. I mean, that he would do anything that would be offensive to a minority!

There was a lot of controversy, and we really were concerned about these murals for fear they would just destroy them and they're very handsome. Now you can see them. It's all calmed down.

Teiser: What was it that Sargent Johnson did?

Cravath: Well, in the athletic field there, one great wall. It's a big sculptured wall.

THE SAN FRANCISCO ART COMMISSION

Cravath: Benny Bufano had designed something for this. This was when I was on the Art Commission, and Ottorino Ronchi was the chairman of the Art Commission, and Tim Pflueger was the architect of the Washington School. Ottorino Ronchi was all for Benny Bufano doing it, and Timothy Pflueger wanted Sargent Johnson because he knew that he was a more reasonable person. It was very difficult to work with Benny. He was, you know, irrational about certain things. So the architect wanted very much to have Sargent Johnson. The chairman of the Art Commission
Cravath: wanted to have Benny Bufano. [Laughter] I was the sculptor member, so I was supposed to be an influence [chuckle] on the Art Commission as far as sculpture was concerned.

I'll never forget going to that meeting. I was so nervous, but I'd defended the Sargent Johnson and pleaded for it, and it won out! I remember Sargent at a preview shortly afterwards; he came up and threw his arms around me. [Chuckle] Well, I've always been very pleased. That was my big battle and my main victory as an art commissioner.

Teiser: How did you happen to be named to the Art Commission?

Cravath: Well, there weren't so many sculptors then. It was Maynard Dixon who was appointed to talk to me about doing it. They thought I wouldn't be too political or controversial or something. Edgar Walter had been the first sculptor member (I think he was instrumental in founding the Art Commission), and I was the second sculptor member of the Art Commission.

Teiser: Who had sent Maynard Dixon to you, do you think?


Teiser: So you agreed. Were you anxious to do it, or were you anxious not to?

Cravath: No, I was interested then. I was quite willing. You see, it wasn't anything competitive. I mean, they just picked out somebody.

Teiser: But it was responsibility, and it involved some publicity.

Cravath: Oh, yes, as you can see here. [Points to article.] This is about it.

Teiser: [Reading from article.] This says, "City honors her. Sculptor named by Rossi. Mrs. Ruth Cravath Wakefield, new board member, one of San Francisco's foremost women sculptors, yesterday was appointed by Mayor Rossi to the Art Commission to succeed Edgar Walter, who resigned from the board last April because of ill health." Then it says that you were president of San Francisco Art Center. You discussed that.
Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: And of the Artists' Council of the San Francisco Art Association. What's that?

Cravath: Well, Artists' Council was a committee of the Art Association that conducted the artists' affairs, advised. They would make recommendations to the board and they always accepted the recommendations of the Artists' Council. I mean, they decided about the annuals and everything that had to do with artists' affairs, the province of the Artists' Council.

Teiser: Here's something about St. Francis. [Reading from article of August 21, 1937 from an unspecified newspaper.] "When questioned about Beniamino Bufano's controversial statue of St. Francis, which is believed to have precipitated Walter's resignation from the board, Mrs. Wakefield smiled broadly. 'I knew that question was bound to come up,' she said, 'but since you must know, I think Bufano is not only a good artist, but a genius. Therefore, had I been on the board at the time, I should have voted to accept the St. Francis, but I'm still not certain where it should be placed. I think that's a question that should be given deep consideration.'"

Cravath: Yes. [Laughter]

Teiser: Which St. Francis?

Cravath: It's the one that was standing in front of St. Francis Church on Columbus Avenue on the steps. A priest came along and said it was in the way of parishioners coming in and out. Then it went to Oakland. Now it's down at the waterfront, Longshoremen's Hall. I remember being at the dedication of it.

Teiser: But I didn't realize it was in the works that early; it was in the '50s that it was put in place here.

Cravath: There has been much talk about Benny Bufano's "St. Francis;" he's done so many of them. His St. Francis is many St. Francises. [Laughter]

But I just have to tell you this little story about the St. Francis that's now at the Longshoremen's hiring hall. Benny had polished parts of it; he said "polished." Well, he polished it, obviously, with shoe polish because it ran; you
Cravath: could see it. But that's "polished." I mean, you could see where it had dripped. He's a funny little character. I did say he was a genius. I think he was a genius.

Teiser: But on the Art Commission you went right ahead and scuttled him in favor of Sargent Johnson.

Cravath: I did. I did. It's a beautiful thing Sargent Johnson did and, well, the architect was having an awful time with Benny because he didn't function the way most people do; I mean, according to any rules or regulations. In other words, he was very difficult to work with, you see, and since Sargent had made designs for it, there was just as much reason for him to have the job as for Bufano, and Benny certainly had his share of public jobs and Sargent was a very capable artist, a very fine artist, as good as Bufano, I think, really. Bufano had the gift of publicity, you know, and he was the darling of the Press Club and so forth.

Teiser: We took photographs of him once and he really knew how to have his photograph taken.

Cravath: Yes. Was that after his hair was dyed and waxed? He would have had such a handsome shock of white hair if he'd just let himself be himself. He would have been much more distinguished looking.

Teiser: Is there anything further about your period on the Art Commission that you feel you should discuss?

Cravath: Well, I was on the Art Commission at the time of the Fair, you see, and the responsibility of the Art Commission was only the San Francisco Building. We had something to say about that, where Robert Howard's whales were.

Teiser: Maybe we should start the next interview with the Fair.

Cravath: I would think so, yes.

Teiser: Let me read this from that same clipping about your being named to the Art Commission. It says here, "Mrs. Wakefield recently was commissioned to do three large figures for the Golden Gate International Exposition, the pieces to be placed in a north court designed by Timothy Pflueger." This was August 1937, so they were starting the commissions by then.
Cravath: Oh, yes, because, you see, the Fair opened in '39, so we were hard at work in '38.

Teiser: Well, we'll start with that next time.

Cravath: Yes. Well, there's lots to say about the Fair.
Teiser: This is the thirteenth of February, the fourth interview, and we have come to the subject of the Golden Gate International Exposition.

Cravath: Right.

Teiser: It went on for two years, did it not?

Cravath: Yes, it did. It was closed, as you remember, in between. There was the Fair in '39; that was the official opening in 1939. I'm not sure for just what reasons, whether they weren't making enough money or what happened, it was closed for several months and then it was reopened as the Fair in '40. It was in the Fair in '40 that there was the art-in-action at the Fine Arts Building.

Teiser: I see, not in '39.

Cravath: There was some. The area in the '39 Fair was more on decorative arts and there was some art-in-action. But for the Fair in '40, Helen Bruton, one of the famous Bruton sisters, and Beatrice Ryan were connected with the Fine Arts Building and in charge of the art-in-action, and that's when they had Diego Rivera.

There was the big rotunda. The art-in-action took place in this big central rotunda place, which had been devoted to the decorative arts in the Fair of '39, more or less. There was some art-in-action in the first Fair, I believe, some weavers and some pottery workers, mostly craft work, because it had been a decorative arts show in the first Fair.

Well, in the Fair of '40, they had Diego Rivera doing his great mural, which now is at the City College in the theatre there, and they have a regular little balcony from which you
Cravath: can view the mural. You go up and look at it and it's very interesting because there are many people in that mural that are artists, like Emmy Lou Packard and various people who have been quite conspicuous, and Dudley Carter. Anyway, Diego Rivera was working on that and that was very exciting.

And they enlisted a group of artists--now, while we're on the art-in-action, we're kind of going ahead. (I mean, that's the Fair in '40.) There was Dudley Carter, who did the great axe sculpture. Do you remember? I think there are some of his things in Golden Gate Park now. He had a double-bitted axe and he wore always a plaid shirt and it was very exciting for the audience to watch him making sculpture with this double-bitted axe, you see, cutting out these big trees.

Harroun: What do you mean double-bitted?

Cravath: Well, an axe that has two cutting blades, you know a great big one with a long handle. I presume, having come from the Northwest, he was inspired by the Indian totem poles. He was a great attraction at the Fair. I think he worked every day there during the art-in-action and he used to sign big wooden chips for people to carry away as souvenirs; a chip off of his redwood. He'd sign it, you see, and this was a cherished souvenir. He was a very colorful member of the art-in-action and he was in the so-called sculpture pit, which was a great place in the center of it. You remember it, don't you, Catherine?

Harroun: Yes.

Teiser: Sculpture pit?

Cravath: Yes, we were low.

Well, Fred Olmsted was making a great big stone head of Leonardo da Vinci in the sculpture pit, which now, I believe, is at the George Washington High School, a great limestone head.

Harroun: Who was Fred Olmsted?

Cravath: Well, he was one of the younger artists at the time, a decade younger than I, I believe, and he was a brilliant fellow. After that, I think he just went into science, some kind of medical science, not a doctor. As far as I know, he hasn't continued to do sculpture, but he was very capable.
Teiser: What happened to Dudley Carter?

Cravath: Dudley Carter, who was not so very young at the time, went back to the Northwest from whence he came and I don't know what happened to him. It's very likely that he's no longer living because he was considerably older. But the Fair was a great thing for him, I think, and also for the public because they loved it.

Let me see. Cecilia Graham did some things in clay, figures, and I can't remember where they are or what they are. But she was one of the sculptors working there.

Teiser: She had been fairly well known before that, had she?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. Her work had a very entertaining, humorous, and decorative quality to it too. She did some figures in the Court of the Pacifica, which we will talk about when we get to the Pacifica.

Teiser: She continued working?

Cravath: Yes, yes, she did.

And then I finished my horse's head that I had started in Montana. I selected this piece of stone from a mountain side in Paradise, Montana. And I was working in the sculpture pit for two weeks. This was in Life magazine, with a picture of the horse posing for me. Yes [Looking at magazine], here it is. I went over to the Cavalcade of America, which was this great pageant, to look for a horse for a model. I thought it would be interesting. And, lo and behold, here was a gray mare who was just the color of the stone. That's why I had to choose her. But she happened to have a baby, so the baby had to come with her, which didn't detract from the interest, one might say. [Laughter]

Well, if you want to hear all the details about the horse models--

Harroun: Oh, yes.

Cravath: I had to take a great big tarpaulin over to the sculpture pit to put under the horse for sanitary reasons, you see, this enormous tarpaulin [laughter], and I remember after the show was over taking it out and dipping it in the Bay. But the
Cravath: amusing thing was that after I had worked there for two weeks--
and it was really lots of fun because I used to have to go
over early in the morning before the Fair opened to do the
thinking and decide what I was going to do for the day because
the public would take so much attention, and rightly so, you
see. And so I would do that and plan the day's work and then
I knew what to do.

And, of course, all the people from Montana were thrilled
because the sign said "Workhorse of Montana Stone." So, after
the two-week stint there, I went up to Montana for the rest
of the summer, from whence the stone had originally come. It's
not granite. It looks like granite and it's the hardest stone
I've ever carved and it's the hardest stone I ever intend to
carve at this point in my life, but it's called felsite, and
it's gray. It looks like granite.

Well, anyway, I was gone for the rest of the summer. When
I came back and went over to the Fair, the guard met me at the
front door of the Fine Arts Building. He said, "You know, we
haven't had a horse in this building since you left." [Laughter]

Well, during that time there was a great party. I think I
should tell you about the party, shouldn't I?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: The Brutons and Beatrice Ryan and all the people who organized
the art-in-action and Kenneth Slaughter, who was in charge of
the Fine Arts Building, decided to have a party for the artists
who had worked on the thing. Diego was there and we were all
supposed to go as some work of art, in costume.

The invitation was awfully clever. I wish I could remember
the exact wording. I think Helen Burton had designed it. But
it was at the time when the "sanity in art" people were a little
bit frowned upon by the more progressive artists. You see,
there was a little snooty feeling, you might say, and I remember
one of the lines in the invitation was, "And there'll be no
'sanity in art,' by golly!" [Laughter] I can't remember the
rest of it, but that was in the invitation to the party.

I went as a painting of Frieda Rivera. My hair was not
grey then. I had brown hair and I braided the colored yarns
into it and just painted my eyebrows together, you see. You
remember how she was. And Diego said I looked like Frieda.
Cravath: He was quite pleased. Maybe she was there, but I can't remember whether she was in San Francisco at the time or not. But I was that. I think it was her self-portrait, if I'm not mistaken, that I had depicted.

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: But it was a great party, a costume party.

Harroun: Where was it held?

Cravath: Right there in the Fine Arts Building.

[Pauses] I think that's about all I can remember about the art-in-action.

My sister-in-law, Dorothy, probably gave you many, many stories because she sold catalogues and she was there all the time. So, she met the public with all their amusing questions. [Chuckle] She had a wealth of stories about it.

Harroun: Yes, I remember them, but we didn't get to that in the interview with her.

Teiser: A lot of artists worked at things not quite related then to arts at the Fair?

Cravath: Oh, yes. They were delighted to have jobs, yes. For instance, Dorothy was a wonderful person to have at the information booth because she knew a great deal about art, you see, and she enjoyed it because she had such a wonderful sense of humor and she was a marvelous person to be directing people around. It was lots of fun because the artists knew each other.

Of course, Helen Bruton was a very prominent artist. She wasn't working in the art-in-action, but she was one of the administrators of the program.

Teiser: She was a member of the Fine Arts Board.

Cravath: Of the Fair, yes.

Teiser: The Bruton sisters--

Cravath: There are three Bruton sisters, Helen and Margaret and Esther Bruton. They lived in Alameda and, I think, at the same time...
Cravath: they had a place in Monterey. Subsequently they gave up their Alameda home and moved to Monterey. They worked together a great deal and they were a very famous trio, the Bruton sisters.

One of them, Esther, married. It's strange the man's name has left me now, but he looked like a Bruton. It was very interesting. He was blond and slender and tall, and they were all blond and slender and tall.

They lived down in the Ojai. They had a home there and Esther still lives there. Margaret, whom we call Marge, and Helen live in Monterey.

Harroun: They're still living?

Cravath: They're still in Monterey. They have a very attractive home down there.

Teiser: I remember they did mosaics. What else?

Cravath: Well, mosaics and etchings and paintings. I think the big decoration that Helen Bruton did at the Fair was a mural. I'm not sure just where it is, but she did a mural. Yes, they were painters, as practically all mosaic artists are painters.

Harroun: It says here that [reading], "'Peacemakers,' a 144' x 58' mural relief at the entrance of the court, is by Margaret, Helen, and Esther Bruton."

Cravath: They all worked on it, yes. It was part of the Court of the Pacifica.

Teiser: What's a mural relief?

Cravath: Well, I think there they mean that there was color in it, I imagine. It's a relief on a wall, that's what they mean. I think there was some color, but it was a mural and it was a relief [laughter], as the Sargent Johnson one was at the George Washington High School. That's another example of the same kind of a mural relief.
Cravath: Well, the Golden Gate International Exposition began in 1939, and, of course, the artists working for it had to work the year before that. Shall we do that now?

Teiser: Yes. I believe that we were looking at a clipping, as a matter of fact, of 1937, in which you had already been commissioned.*

Cravath: Yes, I guess it was that long, because we did most of the work actually in 1938 because the Fair opened in February of 1939; it all had to be done before. So the commissions were given out earlier--I presume the architect of these different buildings chose us sculptors. I know Timothy Pflueger did, and he chose four men and four women for the fountain around the foot of Pacifica. Stackpole did the huge eighty-foot-high Pacifica. He made a quarter-scale model of it, which was twenty feet high, and it was manufactured from that, you see, blown up. And then, as we were just saying, the three Burton sisters did the background relief.

Then there were the four men who did each two figures around the fountain, which was the center of the Court of Pacifica: Sargent Johnson, and his, I think, represented South America because he had two llamas; Carl George--I think his was North America; Jacques Schnier--I believe India; and Brents Carlton, who had Oceania. And they were figures on either side of the steps going down into the fountain, toward the fountain, because there were four entrances, you see. There was a figure on either side, above the figures that were in the fountain.

There were twelve sculptures around the fountain; four of the figures were placed higher than the others. They all were done by four women, three figures each. Cecilia Graham had South America and Addie Kent had Oceania. Helen Phillips, who's been living in Paris for many, many years, had the Orient, and I had North America.

You'd be interested in these days of women's lib to know that the men got more money for their two figures than the women got for their three.

Teiser: They were the same size?

* p. 100
Cravath: No. Well, it wasn't size. I mean, I think they were about the same size. Maybe the men's were a tiny bit larger.

Harroun: Not much larger.

Cravath: No, about the same. This is just the way it's always been. I mean, this is what annoys me when women say that there's been no discrimination. I mean, we were aware of it at the time. We wanted to do the job. We didn't squawk or say anything, but that's the way it was and that's the way it's been. [Laughter] That's my one shining example.

Teiser: Where did you work? You didn't work on them in place?

Cravath: No. Well, we made our small models--I mean, the little designs, which were tiny--in our own studios. At that time, I was borrowing a studio just south of Pacific Avenue, a little place, because I had just moved. But when we made the actual full-scale figures, Addie Kent and Cecilia Graham and Helen Phillips and I worked at August Dackert's. Now, wait a minute. Did Addie? I think she did part of hers in another place, but Cecilia and I worked at August Dackert's, and there were a number of sculptors working there for the Fair. That was right down here at 15th and Shotwell.

August Dackert was a darling old gentleman. I thought he was terribly old then because he was in his seventies. [Laughter] He had a big plaster shop and he had a lot of men working for him, all these professional casters, and it was really a great experience to work with all these casters. Let's see, I think Addie did work there part of the time, so there was Cecilia and Addie and myself and Billy Huff and Olaf Malmquist, whose name shows up many times in the Fair because he was constantly employed at Dackert's. That was his studio. He did all his work there. He was Dackert's man and he was a very nice fellow to work with, a very charming person.

I remember when August Dackert had his seventieth birthday, or maybe it was his seventy-fifth, we made a great, enormous cake of clay. That was the dough, and then we frosted it with plaster and we had cigars for candles. He loved to smoke cigars. Well, of course, it was so heavy, if you can imagine clay and plaster, that it took all the strong workmen who were working there, the casters, you see, who all came in in procession and the strongest men carried it, several of them, and then we all
Well, we worked there for several months. As I remember it, we started in the winter of '38 and that February it rained twenty-one out of the twenty-eight days. That I'll remember all my life. It's a good thing I wasn't trying to do it in the stoneyard.

Cecilia Graham had this old Duesenberg car, a wonderful car. I forget how she acquired it, but it was a touring car, and she would pick me up and drive me to work every day. She lived on Telegraph Hill and I lived on Russian Hill, and I remember we'd ride down Van Ness Avenue and people were so impressed with this old Duesenberg and Cecilia would say, "Duesenberg, Duesenberg," on the way as we drove down the street [laughter], bowing to the right and the left.

We used to, of course, take our lunches and it was beastly cold. So there was a little airtight stove, a little iron stove, that we kept a fire in. I used to take tomato juice and put a can right on the stove and Stackpole—I think he was working there some too—was very amused because it said on the can, "Chill before serving," and I put it on the stove. [Laughter]

Anyway, we worked there for months. Cecilia made her figures, modeled them in clay. Our contracts called to deliver them to the Exposition company in plaster. Now, that meant that if we made them in clay, we had to pay to have them cast in plaster, you see. So Addie and I decided that we'd make ours directly in plaster, which I've always been thankful we did, and thereby save the money of paying to have them cast. Well, Cecilia didn't want to work that way. She made hers in clay and she had the men there—you see, they were right there at the plaster shop—so they cast hers. But Addie and I made ours directly in plaster on armatures.

The men never dared borrow my tools. I'm not a tidy person, but I was fussy about my tools because I'd scrape them and line them all up on the stand at the end of the day, so they knew they'd be missed. [Laughter] One of them said once that's why they didn't borrow my tools. [Laughter] But they were plaster tools.
Cravath: That was my first experience working direct in plaster, and the figures we made are twice life-size, as you can see from the pictures. So, we had to have armatures and I had help making the armatures. And then we used lots of excelsior dipped in plaster to build up the form on the armature, which made it lighter weight.

Then the Exposition company decided that all of these figures should be cast in cement to be durable enough for the Fair because of the water of the fountain. So Cecilia, who delivered the plaster casts, and Addie's and Helen's and mine were all plaster. We had nothing to do with putting them in cement. That was the Exposition company's project. But we did deliver them in plaster.

Teiser: If you had known they were going to be in cement finally, what would you have done?

Cravath: The same thing because I wouldn't work directly in cement, so the procedure would have been just the same.

Teiser: Have you worked much in plaster since?

Cravath: Well, not a great deal, but I've worked directly in hydrocal, which is better than plaster. And hydrocal and cement—I made out this recipe for the Hanna Center job, but now we're getting ahead a few years. But I teach that way of working too, directly; it's a good way to work, I think. You don't have to cast. I've always hated to cast, you see. I did even in those days.

Teiser: And then the Exposition company put your pieces in place? You had nothing more to do?

Cravath: Nothing more to do. When we finished the plaster at August Dackert's shop, that was it. Next time we saw them they were at the Fair.

Teiser: In spite of the fact of being discriminated against, did you get what you thought was a fair price?

Cravath: Well, we were satisfied, yes. I think we were. I know I was. I think there was some justification for that. Whether the men made theirs smaller and they had to have them enlarged, I forget, but it remains that for two sculptures they got more than we did for three sculptures, which figures! [Laughter]
Teiser: But from a practical point of view, perhaps more of the men were feeding more mouths than the women were.

Cravath: Possibly.

Harroun: I don't think that would have anything to do with it.

Teiser: It shouldn't.

Cravath: [Laughter] I don't think at that time the men working around the Court of the Pacifica were any of them feeding more mouths than the women.

Teiser: Ruth, who designed the fountain as a whole?

Cravath: Timothy Pflueger.

Teiser: He conceived this whole thing?

Cravath: Right, right. And he sent a model to our studios.* In the scrapbook you'll see there's a picture of the little figures and the model somewhere, which I think was in the paper. You see, first we made these little tiny figures that went all together.

Teiser: How did you know they would go together?

Cravath: Well, I'll tell you, that's an interesting story. Cecilia Graham came up with something first that Timothy liked, and that's how we had that horizontal effect. You remember the "peanut pusher" that Connick talked about.** And she had the central figure, which was a seated figure, and then she had two low down figures. So she set the movement, you might say, the design, because they all had to harmonize. So we all had to make something that would harmonize with that and that's why I had my Eskimo boy spearing the fish, which was a horizontal design, and the Mexican boy leaning on the basket, which was also horizontal, so that just in form, in abstract form, it would tie in. Cecilia started this all. She got there first.

Teiser: What was your third figure?

Cravath: It was United States, and that was the one up in the fountain,

*See p. 114.

**See p. 115.
Cravath: the seated figure which Catherine calls Maxine. She sat for it.

Teiser: Maxine?

Cravath: Cushing.

Harroun: She was the model for "Bathing Girl."

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: Did you have models for the other two?

Cravath: Yes. My son had been going to Japanese school and a little friend of his posed for the Eskimo boy because the Eskimos look sort of Japanese. So he was my model when I used a model for that. Oh, and I used my son, who was about the right age, for the Mexican boy.

Teiser: How was the other group set, the men's group of figures?

Cravath: I don't know how that came about, but there was a very logical group on either side. They were not quite so close together, you see, because it's a wheel-shaped arrangement.

Those figures are still over there.* The only ones that aren't there now are the four central figures that the women did, "Bathing Girl" and Cecilia Graham's man with the big hat for South America, and Addie's central figure and Helen Phillips'. But there are eight figures by the women and eight by the men that are still there.

Teiser: Yours?

Cravath: Yes, my two. The Mexican boy and the Eskimo boy spearing the fish are there.

Teiser: What happened to the others?

Cravath: The four central ones---they offered them to us, dear, but they're pretty heavy, twice life size. There was nothing we could do about it. I had no place to put it. So they were destroyed, I

*On Treasure Island.
Cravath: guess, the ones that were in the fountain. And then they put [Antonio] Sotomayor's big ceramic map fountain in that space, which is there now; it had been, I believe, in the San Francisco Building. Bob Howard's whales were in the San Francisco Building. And Cecilia Graham had some figures near a fountain adjacent to the whales. I think there were four, were there, figures of hers?

Harroun: No. It says [reading from the 1940 Official Guide Book of the Golden Gate International Exposition], "The noble 'Court of Whales,' by Robert Boardman Howard and Cecilia Graham is in the main room. There are here a mural by Ernest Born of 'The industries of San Francisco' and five standing figures by Raymond Puccinelli. Clarence A. Tantau designed the interior."

Cravath: He was the architect, yes.

Sotomayor's fountain might have been some place else. It was a big ceramic sort of map thing. They haven't maintained the water. The water came up and came down. It was a fountain then. Now it's just an arrangement.

Teiser: Let me ask you another question I should have asked before, in the middle of this. You chose your own figures, each of you?

Cravath: Yes. But I had to represent North America.

Teiser: But you chose freely?

Cravath: Absolutely freely. So I figured Alaska, Mexico, United States was representative of North America.

Teiser: At one time, according to some of your clippings, there was an exhibit of the models for the sculpture, at the Palace Hotel.

Cravath: At the Palace Hotel, that's right. There was. You see, first we made these little tiny models, which fit into the model that Timothy provided us with. Timothy Pflueger provided us with a model of the way the water was coming--I mean, a great big architectural thing--and then we just made in scale these little figures which were, oh, about two or three inches, you see--tiny ones which fit in this scale. I had that model in my studio at the time, and we all had that so that we could make the scale right.
Then we made a working model, which had to be approved, a quarter-scale working model. Well, I have them in the basement now. They were just in plaster of Paris. I had John Magnani help me cast them in plaster, and then I painted them with luminall colors to look like terra cotta. So they were in the exhibition at the Palace Hotel for sculpture. But that was either during the Fair or afterwards because the working models had been used as working models and they got pretty messed up then, so painting them made them fresh. That may have been the occasion of my painting them, I don't know, for that exhibit.

THE EXPOSITION: ATTITUDES AND INFLUENCES

Did anybody have to modify his or her designs to suit the architects that you remember?

No, I don't remember. But [Harris] Connick was—what was his position? Director of the Fair? Oh, he was incensed by Cecilia's "peanut pusher," as they call it, and my Eskimo boy. I mean, they brought forth his—

Wrath!

His fury, his wrath, yes. [Laughter]

How come?

Well, the kind of sculpture he liked was very, very academic and traditional, you see, and there was quite a bit of sculpture in the Fair of that kind that pleased him; I mean, [Ettore] Cadorin and Billy [William G.] Huff and a number of artists who did the very traditional academic sculpture. We were just, I guess, at that time quite modern.

It was modern, yes, but was it West Coast modern?

Well, I don't know that sculpture was that regional, really. Now, Cecilia Graham had worked with Carl Milles. Her work had that sort of a humor to it. And my Eskimo boy spearing a fish—I don't know why that made him so furious. He called it a billiard player, didn't he? Something like that. Yes, because of the spear.

You were saying it wasn't necessarily regional.
Cravath: I don't think it was necessarily regional because the great influence on Cecilia's sculpture was Carl Milles, who was teaching in Michigan, I think, at the time, in the Middle West. After all, the artists got around quite a bit, so I don't think it was particularly regional. Out here, as I've said, I believe, in our last interview, Ralph Stackpole was the great influence because this was at the time of the cut direct. We did talk about that, I believe. Cut direct stone?

Teiser: No.

Cravath: Well, we should have. Can we go back to the '20s right now?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: The sculptors of the last century had sort of forsaken actually cutting stone themselves to a great extent as Rodin did. Things were modeled in clay, and plaster casts made, and craftsmen--very skilled craftsmen, stonecutters--would reproduce in marble a plaster cast that an artist did; I mean, by a mechanical method called the pointing machine. They'd get it down to a certain point and the sculptor would do finishing work on it, but he didn't conceive it from stone that way; he conceived it in another medium and just finished it.

Well, Stackpole felt that the great thing was to work directly in the stone; I mean, to design it for the stone and feel it in the stone. Well, of course, I started my career with that feeling and conviction and I'm still doing it, as you see. I mean, the cut direct school, which was a school of the '20s. Now people don't work in stone very much, but that was Stackpole's great contribution, and I think he was California's greatest sculptor. I really do.

Teiser: There was a New York Fair in 1939. Did you see it?

Cravath: I didn't see it, no. But that radio black marble head at the foot of the stairs was in that. That was my one contribution. I mean, it was an exhibition of, I guess, San Francisco or California art. I was included in that.

Teiser: I wonder if there was any influence here of the Chicago Fair of 1936 or the New York Fair that you were aware of.

Cravath: Well, I wasn't because, I mean, we're very separate out here, but maybe some of the artists were.
Teiser: To go back to Mr. Connick and his criticism, did he reflect viewpoints that you heard from others? Were others outraged?

Cravath: I presume they were, but we didn't hear about them. We thought that was very funny, of course. That was kind of a "sanity in art" idea which we didn't go for. [Laughter]

Teiser: Did you object publicly?

Cravath: I think we just laughed about it. I don't think we were really upset about it because the architect defended it.

Teiser: I'm sure it was a good story for the newspapers.

Cravath: Yes, yes. It was a very good story.

Teiser: There was an implication that some things ought to be thrown out, or wouldn't be paid for, or something.

Cravath: Well, he threatened, yes.

Harroun: I came upon a clipping. Last year in February Herb Caen wrote a column on the Fair, and he mentioned Connick and he said he was a nice gentleman, but that he was put out very soon and somebody else took his place.

Cravath: I believe that's so.

Harroun: So I don't think he had too much of an influence.

Cravath: No, he didn't have an influence on it, no.

Teiser: I just wondered if this was one of the occasions on which people said, "My child could do better than that," or, "My donkey could...."

Cravath: Well, I'm sure that some people did, Ruth, because they still do, you know, but not as much.

It's my one World's Fair. I had never been to a World's Fair, and I had no idea what fun it would be. I just enjoyed it very much and I remember thinking at the time that the greatest fun was working for it; I mean, the fun beforehand. But I enjoyed going to the Fair too. I found it was great, lots of fun.
Harroun: There's one story I recall your telling about, Ruth, that somebody said that your Eskimo boy's was an impossible posture.

Cravath: Oh, yes. [Tape off for telephone interruption.]

What Connick had said was that it was a pool player aiming his cue before making a difficult shot. That was no pool player; that was an Eskimo spearing a fish. [Laughter]

Harroun: But your Eskimo spearing a fish--somebody said that was an impossible pose.

Cravath: So I had to get into it to show them that it was possible. I wonder if I could do it now! [Laughter] But I did it with a great deal of ease then.

Harroun: It was during the period of Ann Mundstock's dance and exercise class, and you were able to do it then.

Cravath: I was able to do it.

Harroun: And Ann said it was possible!

Cravath: Yes, it was possible. But didn't I tell you that a week or so later I was having a little trouble and had to have an osteopath? Sam Bell loved to tell that story about how I had to go to an osteopath after getting into that position! [Laughter]

EXPOSITION SCULPTORS

Teiser: I listed on the outline all the names I could find of sculptors who had contributions in the Fair. Are there any of these that you would discuss particularly? Did you know Haig Patigian?

Cravath: No, I didn't know him personally. Well, I went to his studio once when I was on the Art Commission about something, but I just met him. I didn't know him.

Teiser: He was one of the real old-timers, though, wasn't he, by then?

Cravath: Oh, yes. He was. You know, he did the fireman thing down in the park.*

*The Volunteer Firemen's Monument in Washington Square, San Francisco.
Teiser: Was he in your day considered pretty old stuff?

Cravath: Yes, he was.

We can sort of run down the list of sculptors, and ones that I have anything to say about, I will. I notice you have Mary Hennesy's name. Mary Hennesy is Mary Erckenbrack. I first met her at the time of the Fair. I remember going up to her studio with Beatrice Ryan to look at some work that she wanted to exhibit in the Fair. I was helping Beatrice look at things and go around. She had originally come down from Seattle and her husband was an architect named Hennesy. She was newly divorced and subsequently, almost immediately, took back her own name of Erckenbrack.

Dudley Carter, of course, was from the Northwest. We've discussed him and Cecilia Graham, who was a Mills girl, Mills College, and who studied with Carl Milles in the East.

Dave Slivka was a very active young sculptor in those days. He went East soon after that. And then we've discussed Fred Olmsted.

Olaf Malmquist. He did the "Phoenix," you know. He did a lot of sculpture. And he is the one whose studio was August Dackert's shop. He did all his work there.

Then Stackpole comes next on the list and, of course, you know he did the great Pacifica. And then I don't know what Bufano did for the Fair. [Ettore] Cadorin did, I believe, a figure with the lady holding the moon, didn't he? I think so.

Teiser: And he was one of the conservatives?

Cravath: One of the conservatives, right.

Harroun: There was a lot of fun made of that by people I knew.

Cravath: Yes, right.

Harroun: For instance, Dorothy.

Cravath: [Laughter] It was not exactly Haig Patigian, but that category, you might say. He was very, very traditional, conventional, and very sort of tight in his work.
Cravath: Then Brents Carlton is the next one, who was in the Court of the Pacifica, did two of the figures, and Jacques Schnier likewise.

Teiser: And they were more or less in your--

Cravath: Right. We were all in the same tradition. And Michael Von Meyer--I don't know what he did for the Fair, but he was at the art school when I was teaching there. He was one of the Russians that came over, but he didn't go along politically with Victor Arnautoff and Sazevich, but he was a refugee from the Russian revolution. And I believe he is still living. I see him once in a while. He does very traditional work and he is very formal.

P.O. Tognelli I don't know at all. I know his studio was down near Bob and Addie's studio. I can't remember the name of the street.

Lulu Hawkins Braghetta did a lot of work and I don't know what's happened to her.

Carl George did the things in the Court of the Pacifica. Billy Huff, William Gordon Huff, who went to art school with me, did the figures which we've referred to there. And Sargent Johnson, in the Court of the Pacifica, and Adeline Kent. Robert Howard, of course, did the famous whales, which are now out at the Academy of Science. They have a nice home. And Raymond Puccinelli we've discussed.

Donald Macky, who was the son of E. Spencer Macky, who was the dean of the art school for many, many years, and who was working with architects--I believe he is an architect. He was the one, apparently, who did the Elephant Towers. [Eugen] Neuhaus* makes a reference that it was as much the architect as the sculptor; it was sort of a joint project. That's what he did.

O.C. Holmquist, I have no idea. And Carlo Taliabue I don't know. Helen Phillips was in the Court of the Pacifica.

Harroun: Ruth, who was Helen Phillips?

Cravath: Well, the first time I ever saw Helen Phillips was one summer in, I guess, the early '30s when she was a high school student

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Cravath: and I was teaching the summer class at the California School of Fine Arts. So she is a little younger than I. She was a student. I taught two summers there and one summer I had a bunch of young people, high school students like Helen Phillips, and another summer they were all school teachers who were there for the six weeks. I remember the personnel. It was interesting.

I saw Helen in Paris last month. We spent a couple of days together and she always used to remind me of the fact that she never forgot when I'd liked some legs or something that she modeled. [Laughter] I don't remember, but as a student she said she remembered that.

She went ahead, really, and she's worked with Stackpole and she studied in Paris and she has made a very good record. She's a very good artist. She married William Hayter, who's a printmaker—you've probably heard of him—in Paris, an Englishman, but he lived and worked in Paris. They are now divorced, but they have two sons. When they were out here they were both teaching at the California School of Fine Arts one summer within the last—oh, about ten years ago, I think, because it was after I was up here,* I remember—and their two young sons were with them. But that was some time ago. Helen still has the studio in Paris.

Harroun: Then she was one in the Court of the Pacifica.

Cravath: Yes, she did the figures representing the Orient.

Cecilia Graham is down in Carmel Valley. She's living in that beautiful retirement home up in Carmel Valley that belonged to Senator [James] Phelan's nephew, Noel Sullivan. Well, that Noel Sullivan place is the Carmel Valley Something-or-Other; I forget the name of it. I've seen Cecilia down there. She was ill a number of years ago and she is limited physically, but she has the same spirit.

Harroun: She hasn't done much...

Cravath: No, I don't think she's done much sculpture, but the last time I saw her it was before Christmas time about two or three years ago and she was organizing all the Christmas decorations and

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*On Potrero Hill.
Cravath: she still has the same spirit. She's lively. That's the last time I saw her, but I'm sure she's still there.

Teiser: Her sister is the musician?

Cravath: Janet Graham, yes.

Teiser: What about David Edstrom? Who was he?

Cravath: I haven't the foggiest idea.

Teiser: Who was Clara Huntington?

Cravath: Oh, Clara Huntington, yes, Clara Huntington Young. She is an older woman, much older than I, and she did the St. Francis figure, you remember, that was among the daisies. I think she'd worked some in the East. But I think it was when I first moved up here that she called me and offered me a model's stand, a great big one, which I had to reject, because I couldn't put it in my little studio. But she was quite a bit older than I and she wasn't working at the time. But she did that very nice bronze St. Francis. I think it had different flowers around it at different seasons in the Fair, but I remember it with a lot of daisies around it. She may not have done it just for the Fair, but it was a charming addition to the Fair, I thought. But she was a very good sculptor. She belonged to the old school.

Teiser: I have one more sculptor.

Cravath: One more sculptor that you want to ask about?

Teiser: Edgar Walter, whom you replaced on the Art Commission. What sort of work did he have at the Fair?

Cravath: I'm sorry, I don't remember.

Teiser: Was he in an earlier tradition?

Cravath: Yes, he was. As you know, he did the masks in the Opera House. I think he did those sculptured pieces in the Opera House. He did architectural work of that kind.

Teiser: This brings up something. You have done a good deal of work with architects, I suppose, indirectly or directly.
Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: Do all sculptors do as much work with architects as you?

Cravath: Well, I think so. I mean, sculptors like to work with architects very much. I've been fortunate to have worked with the most cooperative architects, like John Bolles and Mario Ciampi, and Norman Blanchard. Well, we'll get to Hanna Center later. Timothy Pflueger was the first architect I worked with, and he was the architect of the Court of the Pacifica.

THE EXPOSITION: WOMEN ARTISTS

Cravath: Before we get too far away, I noticed you had on your list the "Leopard Shark." It should have been mentioned before the horse's head, because it was in the first year of the Fair. The San Francisco Women Artists had a sort of a big montage. It was designed in an abstract arrangement. [Tape off for telephone interruption.]

The Women Artists designed a big wall arrangement--I don't know just what you'd call it--with different spaces for different artists to put things in. Florence Allston Swift had a space, and Dorothy Cravath--Dorothy Puccinelli she was then--had a space. And that was the first pebble mosaic that I remember Dorothy's doing; it's a fish, her first pebble mosaic, and it is now owned by Mrs. Ansley Salz. Helen Forbes, I think, did something. Quite a few members of the Women Artists did, and I did the "Leopard Shark," which is a relief in polished black soapstone with incised line. A number of years ago--fifteen or twenty years ago--Helen Salz gave that to the Conservatory of Music out here.

Harroun: Is it there now?

Cravath: Yes. When I saw it, it was at the left in the main entrance inside.

She's given a number of things to the University of California. While I was in my Montgomery Street studio, Stackpole's place, there was a beautiful large head that Stackpole did of George Sterling. I showed that to the Salzes and they bought that and
"Leopard Shark", 1939, by Ruth Cravath
Presented to the S.F. Conservatory of Music by Helen Salz.
Cravath: gave it to the University. It's now in Dwinelle Hall, but it doesn't have good light on it. I was very disappointed when I saw it, but I was very happy to be instrumental in finding a permanent home for it, yes.

Harroun: Where is Dorothy's pebble mosaic?

Cravath: It's in Helen Salz's garden here in San Francisco.

Teiser: That montage was not in the '40 Fair?

Cravath: No, that was part of the '39 Fair. It was in the decorative arts section. I don't think there was a decorative arts section in the '40.

Teiser: Catherine, you were just reading about two other pieces, one by Dorothy and one by Helen Forbes.

Harroun: They were in the Court of the Moon and Stars, in the southwest tower.

Cravath: Yes. Those were murals.

Teiser: What were they?

Cravath: They were floral things, I believe.

Harroun: I remember the one of Dorothy's had a man and a woman walking through a garden.

Cravath: Yes, sort of an Adam and Eve thing, wasn't it?

Harroun: Yes. "The First Garden," that was it.


Teiser: Did they do those in place, out there in that windy spot?

Cravath: No, I don't think so. I think they were done in their studios or they were done on canvas. I don't think any of the murals were done out there in place. Any more than we did the sculpture in place. [Chuckle]
THE EXPOSITION: SUMMING UP

Teiser: What other works of art at the Fair do you recall especially as being worth remembering?

Cravath: Worth remembering? Well, of course, we already mentioned Bob Howard's whales, which we have in the city now. [Pauses] Well, Diego Rivera was in the second year of the Fair. Herman Voltz did--let's see, what? I think he did a big mural in the Fine Arts Building. I guess it was in the art-in-action year. It was a stone mosaic, as I remember.

You mentioned mosaic artists. When I looked at this outline I couldn't think of any, but that does occur to me that he did those large mosaics.

Of course, when I think of the artists in the Fair, I think of the Indian sand painters. [Laughter]

Harroun: Oh, yes!

Cravath: That's what I really loved, you know.

Teiser: Were they there both years?

Harroun: Both years, in front of the Federal Building.

Cravath: I think they were, weren't they, part of the Federal Building? They were a great attraction. It was a beautiful pit where they did the sand paintings. It was just really fascinating to see.

Teiser: I asked you if there was anything outstandingly good. Was there anything outstandingly bad?

Cravath: Well, I don't think so, Ruth. I mean, of course, some of the things like Cadorin's and whatever Haig Patigian did in that period we were not interested in, but when you look at the thing as an over-all, it belonged to a different era. Probably it was as good of its kind as some of the contemporary work. I don't think of anything that was outstandingly bad. I mean, I didn't care for those things, but--

Teiser: Did all of you and the people you knew take a good deal of pride in the Fair as a whole?
Cravath: Yes, I think so. I think we all did.

Teiser: I guess a lot of people found commissions there who would not otherwise have had an opportunity.

Cravath: Oh, yes. Right. As I say, it was a wonderful opportunity. The Fair always is a wonderful thing for artists.

Let's see, Sotomayor, who designed the ceramic map fountain, was one of the outstanding artists there.

Teiser: Sotomayor is more of a decorative artist than a fine artist, is he?

Cravath: No, I don’t think so. He’s very versatile. Of course, he, for many years, was particularly famous for his caricatures. He’s done lots of caricatures. I think maybe one reason that you ask that question, or that that occurred to you, is that he had a studio at the Palace Hotel. He was sort of the official artist at the Palace Hotel, so he would be called upon for decorating affairs of the hotel, you see, the designs. But he’s always worked on his own as a painter and as a fine artist, but I understand that the fact that he was connected with the hotel and did a great deal of decorative work for their festivals and the Fairs would give one that idea of Sotomayor.*

And then his caricatures, which are quite separate from the decorative—I mean, he was really famous for those, is famous for them. He’s still working.

Teiser: Did the Fair have a long-range effect?

Cravath: [Pauses] Well, I think probably it did have something to do with San Francisco’s having so many murals. It might even be part of what you see down on 24th Street now, you know, all the murals of the Chicano thing. This would be what might be called a result of the Fair. Of course, the ’30s was all the period of the frescoes when Diego Rivera came here, and it sort of ties together; that’s why I think of the ’30s beginning with the Stock Exchange.

Can we go back for a minute to last week?

Teiser: Sure.

Cravath: We did comment on the fact that the central work of art there in the Stock Exchange was the Diego mural on the stairway,

*See also Dorothy W.P. Cravath interview, pp. 5-7.
Cravath: didn't we? Sometimes I forget important things. In the Stock Exchange Lunch Club. It's on the tenth and eleventh floor, and this big fresco of Diego's is on the landing between the tenth and the eleventh floors, and that is really the big work of art.

Harroun: What is the subject of that?

Cravath: Well, it's California, San Francisco, and I think Helen Wills features in it and characters of the period. Helen Wills, the tennis player. Incidentally, speaking of the '20s and '30s, there's a travertine portrait relief of Helen Wills down in my garden wall that Stackpole did. I'll show it to you.

Teiser: How did he happen to do it?

Cravath: Well, he was working in the stoneyard and she was an important figure of the '20s and early '30s, wasn't she?

Harroun: Yes.

Teiser: Did he do it from life?

Cravath: He probably made drawings of her. She probably didn't sit for the stone carving, but he may have made drawings from life. It's a tennis player with a tennis racket. I always point that out to people as Helen Wills. I don't know whether she knows it's here.

Teiser: Do you think people were more aware of sculpture being done in this area because of the Fair?

Cravath: [Pauses] I wouldn't be sure. I just really don't know because the architects, you know, go all out for a Fair, and then I don't know that there have been many sculpture commissions as a result of it. Maybe so. Maybe our fountain down here, this Vaillancourt one, was an indirect result of it. One doesn't know, you see, because we have quite a few sculptures in public places here. It might have been originally inspired by the Fair. I mean, there's a group of about ten sculptors who are going to do things for the County Hospital, you know. There was an article in the paper about that. Raymond Puccinelli and Jacques Schnier--I was very pleased these two students of mine were included. And my neighbor across the street, Blanche Phillips. It's a little confusing because there are two women
Cravath: sculptors named Phillips: Helen Phillips, who married Bill Hayter, who still works under the name of Helen Phillips Hayter; and Blanche Phillips. I'm not sure whether the "Phillips" was one of her married names, because she was married before she married John Langley Howard, but now she uses the name of Blanche Phillips Howard. She includes the "Howard" because I think Langley wants her to. She's my yoga teacher, across the street.

The Fair may have some relation to the matter of things that have been commissioned.

Teiser: Take a building like the San Francisco Public Library; it has heads around it.

Cravath: And it has dear Gottardo Piazzoni's murals inside.

Teiser: The sculptured heads are the work of anonymous architectural detail people, aren't they?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: Probably came from Europe?

Cravath: I think so. There was an article in the paper just a few years ago about [Albert] Bernasconi, who was the Frenchman who did a great deal of work on, I think, the post office originally here, or maybe the city hall, when he first came out here. And he helped me at Hanna Center, but now, you see, we're getting ahead. I mean, that's where I met him, at the Hanna Center, and I have this article about him--I mean, the pictures of his work--and I think that a lot of these craftsmen haven't really been appreciated, perhaps, because they were casters, you see, and stonecutters, using the pointing machine--I mean, were used to reproducing artists' work. But he did work on his own too.

Teiser: I wondered if it were possible that with the decline of the craftsmen who could make ornaments, artists are taking their places [laughter].

Cravath: Ornaments. Well, they can't afford to have them; it's so expensive, I think.

Teiser: But they can afford artists?
Cravath: They went through this period of "clean" architecture, you know; all this stuff was not "clean." This was kind of a sad time for the artists, the decorators too. It wasn't stylish to have paintings, you see. Of course, this really was very offensive to the artists and, I think, to the sculptors. I think a lot of the "clean" stuff was pretty sterile and now I think that's one reason that there's this interest in Victorian stuff now because it's a little richer and it's more ornamented. There's been objection to our forthcoming Victorian Mews down here, but, after all, the exterior isn't as uninteresting and bare as some of these modern boxes that they put up with plywood.

Teiser: Do you think that really, for instance, artists have now been called to perform tasks that artisans would have earlier performed?

Cravath: Perhaps. Not exactly the same tasks, but to take the place, you might say, for enrichment. For enrichment, yes. I think that's possible.

Teiser: There was never a concerted effort made to keep everything, was there, that was at the Fair?

Cravath: There was the feeling always about it that Fair art was temporary. And, you see, this was very true of the sculpture because most of it was cast in the "fair plaster"; I mean, a recipe with color. As a matter of fact, I think only a few of the things were put in cement like all the things in the Court of the Pacifica, because of the water. This was a later plan, you see. They were afraid that they would deteriorate before the Fair was over with the water running on them. But these great big figures, the others that you read about here, were done in plaster; and Pacifica too, you see, she wasn't near the water. It was done in "fair plaster." There was a recipe that was made to look something like travertine that was worked out and things were all cast in that and that was it. They didn't expect them to be permanent.

Teiser: How about the murals?

Cravath: Now, I don't know what happened to the murals, to Dorothy Puccinelli's and Helen Forbes' and some of these murals. Whether they rolled them up and gave the artists an opportunity to have them, I don't know. I never talked to Dorothy about that.
Cravath: Somebody who might know what happened to some of these things is Martin Snipper. He's the secretary of the Art Commission, and before that he had a job of investigating city monuments. I think he has a survey of things all over the city. He would probably know what happened to some of the Fair things.

SAN FRANCISCO AS AN ART CENTER

Cravath: Martin Snipper would be a good source for you historically, I think. He came a little later into the picture. I don't know whether he came out here in the early '40s or what from New York, but he certainly has been very much in the civic scene since.

Teiser: Is he an artist also?

Cravath: Yes, he's a painter, but I don't think he has much time to paint now. And Elio Benvenuto, who came—I met him first in 1949 or '48 and I think he and Charles Farr came the same year, so we're kind of getting ahead if we discuss them.

Teiser: This brings up something: When you were a young artist here, were more people natives than—?

Cravath: I don't know that they were.

Teiser: People were drawn here?

Cravath: I think so. I mean, I came from Chicago. And Dorothy, of course, came as a child, so you'd say she was a native. But San Francisco has always been a pretty cosmopolitan city, I think.

Teiser: Well, were artists drawn here?

Cravath: Oh. [Pauses to think.] I think mainly they were drawn to New York. I don't know. I think. I imagine that this would be.

Teiser: How about people like Dorr Bothwell?

Cravath: Well, she was born, I believe, in San Francisco. And then she got her schooling in San Diego. Then she lived in Oregon. But she's more or less a native, I guess she's a native.
Teiser: So it was not considered a great Mecca, although you said that you knew about the art school here.

Cravath: Yes, because my parents were out here and they had to find out and let me know. But I think that's how I knew, although the California School of Fine Arts was one of the recognized schools, but I used to be a little offended because they overlooked Chicago when I first came here. There were only two art centers in the country, according to the feeling they had here, and it was San Francisco and New York, and I thought Chicago was pretty good and the Art Institute, you see, because that was where I came from, and I still think so. But there has always been this coast-to-coast tie artistically with San Francisco and New York, I think.

Harroun: People always say, "You should go to New York."

Cravath: Right. And going to Paris; it was the same thing. New York and Paris were very important places.

Teiser: I've heard it said that San Francisco is a place where nobody buys art; you have to go to New York to sell, paintings particularly.

Cravath: Yes, but I think they buy things pretty well in Los Angeles. And that wonderful new museum they have down there. I remember a few years ago there was all this fury because somebody said that Los Angeles was getting ahead of San Francisco culturally, and that really hurts, you know. Now the Oakland Museum is doing historical things that nobody does in San Francisco, don't you think? So, San Francisco had just better not be too smug, you know. [Laughter]
WORLD WAR II YEARS
(Interview 5, February 20, 1975)

Teiser: Now to the World War II period. There was a clipping in your scrapbook collection there about an exhibit of the Women Artists in which there were three sections. One was work that was not related to the war, but two sections, one called Art Assists and another called Art Reports, were actual exhibits of war-related material. That was in 1942. The Art Assists part was things like posters that were useful. And "Art Reports" was things that--

Cravath: Pictures of the war.

Teiser: Pictures of war-related events. Here it is. Your picture's in it. It says [reading]: "The Women Artists Remember the War," San Francisco Chronicle, November 22, 1942. "Seventeenth annual exhibition of the San Francisco Society of Women Artists now at the San Francisco Museum of Art is the first of the local annuals to take direct participating cognizance of the fact that our country is at war," and so forth. Let's see what you had in it.

Cravath: I don't remember that I had anything in it.

Teiser: Why did they use your picture?

Cravath: Well, because I was one of the Women Artists, I guess. I may have had something in it.

Teiser: It says that you're among the exhibitors; it doesn't say what you exhibited.

Cravath: Well [reading topics from outline of suggested subjects for interview], "other war-related work" and "general conditions affecting the artists." Claire Falkenstein, who's a very
Cravath: well known artist, was the president of the Women Artists for half of the war years; I mean, her term was half of it, the early part. She did a big mural over at the Naval Hospital over across the Bay, Oak Knoll. That is, she did a lot of it herself and other members of the Women Artists assisted. It was a big ceremony presenting it to the navy, so that was a big contribution. She, as I say, was president during those war years and was very active in whatever the Women Artists did for the war.

Then I followed her as president, which was 1944 or '45, that term. During that period I had to go East to bring my parents out here--they were ill--and the vice-president, Mrs. [Lulu] James, took over. So I didn't do too well as president of the Women Artists, but I was one of the wartime presidents.

Teiser: Ruth, this is just to clear up a minor point. Your parents first moved to Berkeley in the early '20s and returned to the Bay area--

Cravath: In 1945. They had gone back to Illinois long before that. In the early '30s they went back and lived there for years, and then I brought them out after they were both ill, you see, in '45.

Teiser: So as president of the Women Artists, you had a fragmented period of activity.

Cravath: Yes, because during that two-year period part of it was interrupted.

Teiser: Did you have, however, any special program? Did you start out hoping to do anything special?

Cravath: Well, I can't remember anything very special except, I mean, we had the regular activities, the exhibition--Oh, yes, I do remember. Always the Women Artists had a big annual exhibition, which included the decorative arts. I think we discussed that once before. And the exhibits were at the San Francisco Museum. Always there has been heartbreak about juries. You know, people are rejected and so forth, and to be rejected usually it would be a majority; that is, three out of five or two out of three would turn it down. So I had a theory--and I've almost regretted what I did since--that people would feel better if there was one juror and they'd say, "Well, it was just not that person's taste that that person didn't take it." Every year
Cravath: there'd be trouble with the Art Association and the Women Artists; I mean, lots of heartbreak and disappointment and arguments and so forth.

So I said, "Why not invite one person from out of town, one expert, to jury the show?" I thought that people couldn't be as unhappy if one person turned them down as they would if three people turned them down. So we got Donald Bear—that was my big project—from the Santa Barbara Museum to come up and jury the show. That was an innovation, and since then some of the other organizations have done it. So that's the one innovation that I brought into the Women Artists.

Teiser: Did it work?

Cravath: No, it didn't work. They weren't happier, so that's why [laughter] I didn't think it was a success! That's why I said I almost regretted it, but I guess somebody else would have done it if we hadn't started it.

Teiser: You were on the Art Commission early in the war till '43.

Cravath: Let's see. It was 1937 to '43, I believe.

Teiser: Do you feel that you had one special thing that you did on the Art Commission?

Cravath: Yes, I had one special thing I did on the Art Commission and that was that as the sculptor member of the Art Commission, I was very much for Sargent Johnson's mural. That's the best thing I did.*

Teiser: During the war, as I remember, a lot of artists went into war work.

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: Did it disrupt the continuity of events here?

Cravath: Well, no more than it did everywhere, I think. A lot of people did war work. The clock was changed, and people had to go into the army, so, of course war disrupts things, yes. Well, you remember, Dorothy did welding for a while.

Teiser: She did?

*See pp. 96-98.
Cravath: Oh, yes. She had a job over in Sausalito at the shipyard. It was of short duration, but she did.

Teiser: Were there any artists whose careers were cut off by the war, either through death or through just being deflected by circumstances?

Cravath: Yes, there was one artist, a very important artist; that's Lucien Labaudt. He was not in the service, but he was an art reporter for *Life* magazine and he was killed in a plane crash over somewhere in the southeast islands or somewhere, so his career as an artist was definitely cut. The Labaudt Gallery is a memorial to him and Marcelle always has hanging the last painting he did from--I forget whether it was Burma or what. It's just a little sketch and it hangs in a certain place.*

**TEACHING IN THE '40s AND '50s**

Teiser: During this period of war and the later '40s, you were doing a lot of teaching, were you not?

Cravath: Yes, yes.

Teiser: Was that your heaviest period of teaching?

Cravath: Yes, I guess in the '40s and into the '50s, yes.

Teiser: I've listed the places at which you were teaching [referring to outline]. Which of them did you start with?

Cravath: [Looking at outline.] Well, I started teaching at--of this group--the Dominican Convent in 1943, and I taught there until '49.

Teiser: How many classes did you have?

Cravath: I went over two days a week. Two days a week I went, and it was a long day. I went over early and I had all the grammar school and the high school; not any of the college. That was quite a bit of work. While I was there, I became acquainted

*See also pp. 88-89.
Cravath: with the Dominican sisters and Sister Leonard, of whom I'm particularly fond, was at Dominican when I went there. The next year, I believe, she was the principal of St. Rose Academy in San Francisco, so she persuaded me to go to St. Rose. I think I went two days a week to St. Rose, but it was just one class. It was right after lunch. It was only one period. It was an interruption in my working day, but it wasn't arduous; it was just traveling back and forth. So I was going two days to Dominican and two days to St. Rose for a number of years.

And then at the California School of Fine Arts I taught the children's class Saturday mornings.

Teiser: At the same time?

Cravath: Well, I started, I think, early in '39. But I taught there until '49, I think. I guess it must have been almost ten years. I'm not sure. I'm awful on dates. That was the Saturday morning class.

Teiser: I'm amazed that you were able to do so much work of your own with so much teaching.

Cravath: Yes. [Laughter]

Teiser: When were you at Mills College?

Cravath: Oh, two summer schools, so that was only six weeks two different summers, either the summers of '45 and '46, or '46 and '47. I'm not sure.

Teiser: Was that your first teaching in college?

Cravath: No, but I didn't teach college at Mills; I taught a children's class in the summer.

In my private studio I had an adult class. Catherine, you were in it, and that was in the '40s, wasn't it?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: Well, I couldn't have been doing all this teaching at one time, but that was only a one day a week class, you see.
"LIVING PICTURES"

Teiser: How did you get involved with the Temple Emanu-El, with the Living Pictures?

Cravath: Well, that came about through the Dominican Convent, interestingly enough. The Dominican Convent had an old tradition of Living Pictures, which was started when Louis Goldstein's, the costumer's, daughter went there to school. It was her idea, I think, to have these Living Pictures and, of course, it was a wonderful job for her family. For years, every year I was there, six years, we did Living Pictures and they continued to do them afterwards. I don't know whether they do them now or not. They may have given up finally, but for many, many years they did. It was a big annual, and that was a lot of work.

Teiser: They would choose a picture and--?

Cravath: First we'd choose a program of the pictures we would give, you see.

Teiser: Oh, a number of them?

Cravath: Oh, yes. I have all the programs over here for years if you're curious to see them. The program would usually consist of from twelve to eighteen paintings, masterpieces, and when I started doing them I had the girls painting the backgrounds. Before I went, they had sort of a gauze over the scene, but I don't think they painted the backgrounds and it didn't occur to them to raise the floor to make it look like a scene. I had the floors painted--Flemish paintings, you know, with the squares. Yes, it was kind of fun to do it, but it was an awful chore. But it was good for the kids to paint, to try to reproduce the backgrounds of the pictures, and Goldstein's did the costumes, fortunately. We didn't have to do that.

But at St. Rose Academy, Sister Leonard wanted Living Pictures for a Mother's Day program, so I did Living Pictures twice a year for six or seven years. The convent program was in the fall, as I remember it, and the Mother's Day program was in the spring when Mother's Day is. We did fewer pictures and they were all of mothers and children, some Mary Cassatt and Renoir and lots of madonnas. This was for Mother's Day. In that we didn't go to Goldstein's. We did that much more economically, and I used to concoct the costumes.
Teiser: Did you do them more than once for Temple Emanu-El?

Cravath: Oh, yes. [Laughter] We didn't know we were going to get into Living Pictures! It was because of the St. Rose that somebody told Temple Emanu-El. It was for the Women's Guild at Temple Emanu-El. They have a big program and tea. But they were hard to select because they were supposed to be great women of the Old Testament and, you know, there was the anti-painting thing and the Jewish business. You know, "graven images" and all that. This really had some slight effect. We had Rembrandt's picture of Esther, but it was hard to find masterpieces that fit into the program.

We had a Statue of Liberty because the poem on that was written by a great Jewish woman. But they wanted to have Deborah. Well, of course, Esther was easy. It was quite something to find these works of art, but we did it.

But there we had all the equipment. I mean, they had a wonderful stage with lighting effects and everything, and I could get any costumes I wanted at Goldstein's. I think I did it twice for the Guild, with many years in between, and then that got me into the Jewish Welfare Federation.

One year I did the pictures at the Fairmont Hotel for the Jewish Welfare Federation, all the different agencies. But we didn't have to reproduce works of art; we had scenes that depicted the work of the agency in costume, but they were pictures, you see. That was given in the room where the banquet was, the annual banquet of the Jewish Welfare Federation.

Harroun: Do you think that the early work that you did with the Players Club helped you with the Living Pictures?

Cravath: Oh, definitely! I mean, I wouldn't have known how to do anything on the stage. That's very true. Yes, it tied in with that.

Then the last Living Pictures that I did were for the Blood Bank, and that was because Marshall Kuhn, who was very active in the Jewish Welfare Federation, remembered that program and he thought that was wonderful. So when the Blood Bank had its great big banquet at the Fairmont Hotel, we had to have Living Pictures of different scenes from the Blood Bank and that was interesting--how blood was used and so forth. And the final picture was some of the actual donors over the years.
Cravath: That's, I think, my last appearance on the stage with Living Pictures.

Teiser: Did you appear in them?

Cravath: No, I didn't, but I had to come out and take a curtain call and get a big bunch of flowers on this Blood Bank one. [Laughter] That's the only one I remember the curtain call. [Laughter]

Teiser: [Laughter] Well, you were busy!

Cravath: Yes. You know, when we go over it, it seems a lot of energy was used up with these projects with these pictures and organization work, so I feel more comfortable now that I say "no" to things.

THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS AFTER WORLD WAR II

Teiser: The California School of Fine Arts in the years after World War II is something we've been interested in. There seemed to be a great renaissance. In the postwar period the GI Bill let a lot of people go to art school who probably wouldn't have had another chance to.

Cravath: Yes, there were many of the lads that were on the GI Bill.

Harroun: Is that when [Douglas] McAgy came in?

Cravath: McAgy was the director of the art school, and Ansel Adams was instrumental in starting the photography department there and then Minor White took over.

To go back to--wait a minute. What was the connection I thought of? Oh, dear. I had an idea and it's left me. It came up with the art school. Oh, yes. I know what it was. You spoke about the students after the war that had the federal grants for education. When I went to art school, and this is going back into the early '20s, it was the same thing, and we called them federal board students. Jay Risling was one. The men that went to school with us were, many of them, older men because they had been in World War I.
Harroun: I didn't know that.

Cravath: Yes. And I'm afraid I didn't mention that when we were discussing that period. This was twenty years earlier, World War I, but it was the same thing. Of course, at that time, it seemed like it was a very vital school to us because we were young, as I said, and that had something to do with it, because these men brought a great deal of maturity to it, you see, which happened after the Second World War again.

Teiser: Were you aware of McAgy as an influence?

Cravath: [Pauses] Well, I think McAgy maybe was responsible for bringing Clifford Still out here. So, he was an influence in that. Let's see. There was Clyfford Still and one or two others of national reputation that McAgy brought out, yes.

Teiser: You don't rate McAgy as a very high influence?

Cravath: Not in connection with the school, but that was definitely an influence, bringing these people out.

Teiser: You were teaching adult classes by then there, or still children?

Cravath: Oh, you see, what happened was that I taught the adult classes at the California School of Fine Arts before I taught the children's classes. As you know, in the '20s, I took Stackpole's place because there weren't other sculptors. Well, then they had Sazevich and there were men available and I didn't teach an adult class at the California School of Fine Arts ever again. The last year that I taught the children's class was, I believe, '49, and then I resigned from that. Oh, I taught one summer school for Gurdon Woods; he wanted me to. But by that time I was tired of teaching children.

Teiser: You mentioned Gurdon Woods.

Cravath: He was the director of the art school after McAgy, for a number of years. Gurdon was a very energetic and innovative director. I think he had a great influence on the school. It was quite a while after the war, I guess, when he was there.
PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURES OF THE 1940s

Teiser: Meanwhile, back to your own work. Going back to 1941, just at the beginning of the war, there was a clipping about your having had an exhibit in what was called the "little gallery" in the San Francisco Museum of Art.

Cravath: Yes. There was what they called a "little gallery." It was one of those little rooms just off of the rotunda gallery as you go in, and I had an exhibition of sculpture there. Then later in the '40s--I think it was still in the '40s--I had an exhibition in one of the larger galleries off of what they call the west gallery. You go all the way down and there's a big gallery where they have the rental gallery and there's one on each side. In the gallery on the right side of that I had an exhibition of paintings and sculpture. But these were during the war years, I think, when everybody was so busy. They came and asked me for that exhibit. Now artists are all clamouring to get exhibits. I mean, there's more of us wanting exhibits than they have space for, but then they were even soliciting an exhibit, so it's a different scene.

Teiser: You were painting all the time, I gather.

Cravath: Somewhat, yes. I mean, sort of a summer painter, but I enjoy doing a number of portraits. I haven't painted since I've been on the hill, so it's sixteen years since I've done any painting.

Harroun: Did you do any painting at Stackpole's when you were living there?

Cravath: Yes, I did. Not very much. I think I just did one double portrait of Christine Wells and her mother, who is now Mrs. Donald Kirby, the wife of the architect. Her husband died, Wells, and I did a portrait of mother and daughter.* I did that on Montgomery Street in Stackpole's studio. I showed that one at the Rotunda Gallery.

Teiser: What did you show in the big room at the San Francisco Museum?

Cravath: Well, it wasn't a big room, but it was bigger than the so-called "little gallery."

Teiser: What paintings did you show in that?

*See also p. 147.
Cravath: I think I showed paintings there. If so, they were probably portraits. I don't think I showed anything but portraits and sculpture. I wish I had a list of what was in that show, but I haven't. I think the portrait of the twins, the family group, one of Sam Bell and one of me, was there.

Harroun: Sculptures?

Cravath: Sculpture, relief in red sandstone. There are three panels. Maybe the one I did of Chiang Kai-shek, which is down in the basement now. [Laughter] I did a portrait of Chiang Kai-shek.

Harroun: Oh, you did?

Cravath: Well, those were days when he was a more popular person.

Teiser: Did he sit for you?

Cravath: [Laughter] Oh, I was able to get quite a few photographs of that gentleman!

Teiser: What was it done for?

Cravath: Oh, I think it was done for some exhibition during the early '40s. It's a relief carving in limestone.

Harroun: What year did you do the portrait of Beatrice Judd Ryan, the painting?

Cravath: That was done on Filbert Street. I moved from Filbert Street in '48 or '49. It was probably '47 or '48.

Harroun: And was that shown at the Rotunda Gallery?

Cravath: Yes, I think that was in that show.

Teiser: I thought you had several shows in the Rotunda Gallery.

Cravath: I showed in some group shows there, but as far as the one-man show, I think it was just the one. But I showed there considerably over the years; I mean, either in group shows or things that she had for sale.

I think the portrait of Beatrice Ryan was done before that. If so, it would have been in that show. I think the one of the Wells, mother and daughter, was in the show, and Audrey Evans
Cravath: and Evan Evans. There were several paintings, paintings and sculpture; it was all portraits. And the one of Anne Cravath across the Bay, the marble relief, was in that show. You know, the one of Anne as a little girl which I did at 1716 Montgomery Street. It was in the living room over there* in the corner by the window. This portrait was in that because the City of Paris made the frame for that, and for the one of Cora Felton, Mrs. Charles Felton. That's down in the studio, and those two were sort of companion pieces because they were both in Tennessee marble. I mean, they balanced each other. The City of Paris made these frames for them, which are very nice, which I am grateful to have.

Teiser: What was the 1944 Denver Art Museum exhibition?

Cravath: Oh, that was some annual show and I sent a head that was exhibited there.

Teiser: I couldn't tell when from the clipping, Ruth--you made a "safety award relief."

Cravath: Oh, yes! That was done while I was at 802 Montgomery, yes, and for the lumber companies in Fort Bragg, the Johnson Memorial Relief. It's a trophy that's given every year to the lumber company that has the best safety record. That was done, I know, when I was at 802, the studio Dorothy and I shared together in the '40s sometime. It's a relief.

Teiser: A stone relief?

Cravath: No, it's in bronze and it's very interesting because they had a competition in the area for the high school peak students and the amateur artists. Everybody competed for a design for this Johnson Memorial tablet; I mean, all the people interested in logging and lumbering and so forth. So they brought their winning design down to me. You know, an artist had to model it. It was a drawing and it was really quite charming. There was a Sawyer and a lumberman together, and they were the most naive primitive drawings! I didn't want to reproduce that. They didn't want it just that way, but it was the idea.

*In the house of Austin M. and Dorothy Cravath in Berkeley. Anne Cravath is their daughter.
Cravath: So I used the two figures and the saw, but rearranged the figures. I used their background. It was something to model a mill and some trees and stuff! [Laughter] I think there was a picture in my scrapbook. I've kind of forgotten what it looks like.

Teiser: There was lots of detail.

Cravath: Yes. Oh, lots of detail! It was not my design.

Teiser: It didn't look like it. I wondered about that.

Cravath: Did you? It was my interpretation of the winning design. I re-drew those two figures, but the rest of it was, as nearly as I could follow, their design. But the figures were--I couldn't have--it would have lost--I mean, if they had modeled them, it would have been a direct naive thing, but for me to interpret that, it would have been worse than it was. [Laughter]

MONTANA

Teiser: In all this time, along with everything else, you seem to have been hopping off to Montana in the summers and working there.

Cravath: Oh, yes, yes. And I did more work in the summer months up there. You asked about how I did any work while I was teaching; those summer months in Montana were my best working time. I did the "Mountain Goat" and a group called "Security"--there's a picture in some of the publicity--which is now owned by Helen Oldfield. I gave it to Helen and Otis Oldfield. We bartered. That painting hanging in there, one of Otis' paintings, was traded for that.

So I did that. That was completely done up there in Montana. Oh, and the little fawn which you know, that red sandstone fawn, which is in the studio now, and that was one of my successful ventures in limited edition. I had some reproduced in terra cotta, which I worked on, and then some cast in cement, and you had a cement one.

Harroun: Yes, and our landlord has been mourning that ever since it was stolen.
Cravath: Oh, it was stolen! Oh, well, that's good. I'm in a good class now. Yes, when you have your work stolen—that was my first experience, I guess, of having work stolen.

Teiser: Did being in Montana have an effect upon your work? I mean, did it simply allow you a freedom, or did the place have an effect on you?

Cravath: Well, I love it very much and I didn't have any worries and responsibilities; I mean, no teaching. It was really great for me. I don't know whether it really affected my work particularly, but it gave me the peace of mind and the opportunity and the place to work.

Teiser: It's a ranch, is it?

Cravath: Yes. [Tape off briefly.]

Teiser: (That was an interruption to investigate an unexplained noise.) Well, we were in Montana.

Cravath: Yes. My mother's sister and her husband had this beautiful ranch in northwestern Montana, and those were wonderful summers for a number of years. Before the war we went there and then during the war we didn't, and then after the war I went back for a few summers. But my aunt and uncle both died, so the ranch was sold.

That's where I started the horse's head and where I did the "Mountain Goat" and the little fawn. The little fawn was from life. I had been there just a few days when my cousin came in from the fields with this new-born fawn. It was a cold June day and he sat down in the warm kitchen and the little thing was on his lap and I made a lot of drawings. Then it was the pet and the children would feed it with a nursing bottle. It was kind of mean, I suppose, taking it away from its mother, but it was called "Dearie" and it was our pet. They fixed a pen for it. So it was really done from life, that little fawn.

Teiser: How about the "Mountain Goat?"

Cravath: [Laughter] My son and I went for a hike from Big Fork up to the top of a mountain and I found a mountain goat's skull right near the top of the mountain, so that was the nearest to an actual goat that I had.
Cravath: Oh, also, I did a little white marble hen, which you might be interested in hearing about. You remember the little hen?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: Mary Bolles has it now; John Bolles bought it. It was in the rental library at the San Francisco Museum, and the interesting thing about it is that it was rented by or for a blind woman who couldn't enjoy paintings, but someone was sensitive enough to rent a piece of sculpture for her. It was in the round. So she had it for several months and I always was rather pleased with that idea. But after that it was sold to Mary Bolles. That was one of the Montana opuses.

Harroun: What material was it?

Cravath: White marble.

Teiser: So you ran to animals then.

Cravath: On the ranch, yes. [Laughter] This was one of the residents of the ranch and the little fawn was a resident. And the work horse, "Grizzly," you see, was also one of the residents there.

Teiser: There was an article in the Montana newspaper about your doing a head of someone, of a person there, though.

Cravath: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, I did the head of Angelo Rossi, which is in our city hall, in Big Fork, Montana. That was one of my Montana summer projects.

Teiser: I see. Well, this [referring to article] says you did a portrait of Dick Sayer of Big Fork.

Cravath: I also did that, right. That's Betty's, my cousin's, son. I think I did Dick's head the same summer, or maybe the next summer. I was in Big Fork two summers. Yes, he was a Montanan, Dick Sayer.

Teiser: You were in Big Fork two summers?

Cravath: Yes, I wasn't at the ranch. I went back and forth. My cousin lived in Big Fork. I had the little house connected with the high school, a little caretaker's residence. It was during the summer. The school was not in session, so I had this little
Cravath: cottage to live in, and that's where I did the mother with the child and the milk can,* and I started the "Mountain Goat" there, and I did the portrait of Dick Sayer, and I did Angelo Rossi.

We went over there to the ranch weekends some, but I was with my cousin. I spent part of that summer on the ranch, but not the whole time, because I was there for several months, you see, during the whole summer.

Teiser: The Rossi head was commissioned by the city of San Francisco?

Cravath: Well, it was a committee appointed to do something about a Rossi memorial. Mr. [Edward] Wobber, I believe, was the chairman of the committee—Wobber, you know, the stationer. It was his daughter, Eleanor Wells, that I did the painting of, the painting with her daughter. Eleanor Wobber Wells she was at the time, now she's Mrs. Donald Kirby.

Teiser: And you were chosen by a committee to execute the Rossi head?

Cravath: I don't think I was chosen by a committee. I think probably Eleanor suggested it to her father. I had to please the committee because I wanted to do the head and mount it on a marble block. I knew they would have to have that carnation that Rossi always had, a white carnation I believe, but I wanted to carve this into the marble block or granite block that the head would be set on, because I don't like shoulders, collars, and men's clothes. But that didn't please the committee; they wanted the coat and the shoulders and the flower modeled, and I had to go to Kalispel, Montana, to get a carnation for a model [laughter], to a florist's shop there. It was a very difficult thing to model, I assure you, a carnation. So that's how he happens to have that coat. He's in the city hall now, you know.

Teiser: By the time you were commissioned to do Mayor Rossi's portrait, he had been dead for several years, had he not?

Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: Do you remember him?

*Titled "Security," now owned by Helen Oldfield. R.C.
Cravath: Well, indeed I do. He was the one who appointed me art commissioner.

Teiser: So you really knew what he looked like.

Cravath: Oh, yes. I knew what he looked like. I mean, I recognized him, and I was in his office at that time and, of course, I saw him a number of times, but nevertheless I had to do it from photographs, of course. I had a pretty good collection of photographs to work from.

Teiser: Was there a great ceremony when it was installed?

Cravath: Oh, yes indeed. It was very amusing because they'd seen pictures that were taken of the plaster cast, you see. I had that photographed before it was cast in bronze, so that was white. Somebody had seen this picture and thought it was in white marble, I guess, and there was a very flowery speech [laughter] before the unveiling about this—you know, "these features in this white marble," or something. So, it was a little surprising when they unveiled it and it was in bronze! [Laughter] It was a great ceremony in the rotunda of the city hall. I remember walking into the thing with Monsignor Guilfoyle, who is now Bishop Guilfoyle. That's where I met him. He was the priest in the ceremony.

Teiser: Did you have time to do any other commissions in that busy decade?

Cravath: Oh, yes indeed. A very important commission, I think, for my career, because it was really what got me into liturgical art, was the St. Theresa, which is in Vallejo at St. Basil's Church. That was done in 1946 and '47.* I did that in Ralph Stackpole's stoneyard. That was before I had the stoneyard, and that was during the war, or right after the war, you see, and he was living on the farm up near Cloverdale and he still had the stoneyard. I think Cadorin rented the upstairs studio, but I had the privilege of the stoneyard, and Phil Pratt, I believe, had his shop in the corner. I'm not sure.

Teiser: He was a jewelry maker?

Cravath: Yes. He was there during my tenancy subsequently of the stoneyard and the studio upstairs.

*See p
Cravath: That is in Tennessee marble, the St. Theresa, and it was because of that that I got the commission for Hanna Center, I think.

Teiser: Do you want to take up the liturgical art later and go back to the Art Festivals now?

Cravath: Oh yes.

THE SAN FRANCISCO ART FESTIVALS

Cravath: Okay, we'll go through some of the Art Festivals. Very good. The Hotaling Place one [reading from outline].

Teiser: Was that the first?

Cravath: Yes, the Hotaling Place in 1941, just before the war, wasn't it?

Teiser: The spring before.

Cravath: The spring of 1941. It was a marvelous, bright, sunny Sunday, and Hotaling Place from Washington Street to Jackson Street was just lined with paintings on both sides. Stackpole's stoneyard was opened to the decorative arts. They had pottery and various things, and also I think there were some refreshments sold or served in the stoneyard, so that was a part of it. It was subsequently my stoneyard, but at that time it was Stackpole's; he still had it.

My horse's head was in the show. It was at the hitching post there. Were you there?

Harroun: I was there, but it was so crowded I don't remember that.

Cravath: Well, it was very successful.

Teiser: Who started it?

Cravath: A group of the artists. Ottorino Ronchi, I believe, was the chairman of the committee, and Vivika Heino, who was a ceramicist, a potter, and Marion Cunningham. It was a committee
of about ten artists that organized it. This was the first one, and it was such a success—I mean, it took me forty-five minutes to get from one end of Hotaling Place to the other it was such a crowd—that we decided to have another one in the fall.

So we used the corner of Jackson and Montgomery where the Tour d'Eiffel Restaurant used to be. Do you remember that? Well, the Tour d'Eiffel Restaurant was not there then, and that corner was vacant, so we were able to use that for receiving the paintings, and the artists brought things down. We were a little more organized for the second time and realized that we'd need more space than just Hotaling Place, so the city gave us permission to come around the corner on Jackson Street.

Clay Spohn made some wonderful big mobiles and things for decorations, so a lot of work went into that and collecting the work ahead of time. Before we just took the work down and hung it that one Sunday. But we were organized for the second one and the appointed day was set in the fall, in November, I believe. It was not too long before Pearl Harbor. And it poured rain, just poured rain, so we had to call it off, of course. We couldn't have the outdoor show. So we postponed it for a week and the next weekend it poured rain again, and the last thing was that we decided to have it in the Ferry Building. That's how it got into the Ferry Building.

That was very providential because there was much more space in the Ferry Building, and the whole human race came down to see it. We never could have handled the crowd. Even though it was a rainy Sunday, I mean all of San Francisco turned out and it would have been completely out of control in Hotaling Place, so the rain was really providential.

But it was very exciting setting it up. We decided the night before. There was a truck that carried the paintings, and then we had a bucket-line of artists all the way up the steps into the Ferry Building, just handing the paintings up one after another. All the artists got them into the place and hung the show.

I think that's one of the most successful financial deals. Every artist who entered something in the show invested a dollar. You had to pay a dollar and there were so many sales that everybody got his dollar plus a quarter back, a dividend. Now, if
that isn't pretty good for a one day investment, a dollar and a quarter!

When the work was sold, did a portion of it go to the festival committee?

Well, that's where the money came from.

But the artist got most of it?

The artist got most of it, but there was a commission. I don't remember whether it was ten per cent or what the commission was, but there was enough from the commissions from sales so that everybody got back his dollar plus twenty-five cents.

Beatrice Ryan and a lot of prominent people were on the sales committee, and Lucien Labaudt was with us then, and it was a great day. It was just a great day. It really was quite a thing.

Do you think that the experience that you all had with the 1939-'40 Fair kind of got you into this?

Oh, I think so, yes. I think probably it had quite a bit to do with it, yes.

Was it unjuried?

Oh, absolutely unjuried, absolutely. Artists were willing to sell things very reasonably and there was such a festival spirit and things were sold. I sold a number of things.

Small things?

Well, I sold, I think, a reproduction of the fawn and, I think some drawings. Yes, small, not expensive things.

In the clipping on that one in Hotaling Place, it said that Timothy Wulff made a register or something.

Oh, yes. He was very important, yes.

What did he do actually?

Well, he was one of the organizers of it.
Teiser: Who was he?

Cravath: Timothy Wulff was a painter. He owned my studio building, you know, 716 Montgomery, he and Dr. Eloesser together. He didn't paint for many years, but he had been a painter as a younger man. As a matter of fact, one period in the early days he and Dorr Bothwell were engaged to be married. Timothy and Dorr. And we always quoted Timothy; they were sketching on Telegraph Hill or something, and he referred to the "more cultured and less civilized areas that were rather cold" when they were sketching, and I always thought that was an amusing expression, "more cultured and less civilized." [Laughter] He was my landlord.

Teiser: [Laughter] Is he still alive?

Cravath: No, he died a number of years ago. He and Luke Gibney died in the same year.

Teiser: Marion Cunningham had a leading part in the organization of the festival?

Cravath: She did. She was quite active. She was on the committee and worked on it.

Teiser: She made silk-screen prints?

Cravath: Right, yes. Many, many prints. Yes, she was very successful.

Teiser: So, I should think her kind of work would sell great at fairs.

Cravath: Yes, I think they did. Beatrice Ryan sold many of her things in the Rotunda Gallery.

Harroun: She made a lot of little greeting cards. I still have some.

Teiser: Had you known her long?

Cravath: She was married to Ben Cunningham. I didn't know her before she was Marion Cunningham. She was born, I believe, in Fresno and came from Fresno. As a matter of fact, just before she left on the trip that she didn't survive--she was going to North Africa--she had dinner at my house. It was Dorothy and Marion and someone else. There were four or five of us.
Haroun: And she went to New York?

Cravath: She was going to North Africa and she was stricken in New York and operated on and it was a brain tumor and she didn't survive. She was very beautiful and very charming. You remember her?

Haroun: Oh, yes, I do.

Cravath: Yes, such a darling person. It was very sad.

Teiser: Was she still married then?

Cravath: No, they were separated, divorced.

Haroun: Then Ben Cunningham went East, didn't he?

Cravath: Yes, he did.

Teiser: Is he a painter, Ben Cunningham?

Cravath: Yes, I think he was a member of the early Modern Gallery group. I'm not sure.

Teiser: Well, the Art Festival, then, began as an artists' enterprise.

Cravath: It began as the artists putting it on, yes. It was not city sponsored, other than the city provided the lights and the street sweeping and the services. They were cooperative, but it was done entirely by the artists--the first. Well, when the war came along it rested for a while and then I think the next one was in the Civic Center, when the sheds were up. You remember the barracks that were there in the Civic Center during the war? They were very useful to hang paintings, and they used them to hang the paintings. Then it went around various places. One year it was in the old Palace of Fine Arts. It rained that time. That was in '49 or '50 because I remember showing one of the "Stations of the Cross" for Hanna Center there. I think it was there at least twice.

Teiser: When did it start deteriorating?

Cravath: Well, I wouldn't say that it deteriorated. I mean, to me, at first, it was wonderful. It was unjuried and there was such a spirit, and a lot of people bought non-professional works of art. But of course more and more and more and more people wanted to get into it, and I guess they had to somehow or other
Cravath: control the volume of stuff. So then they started having—well, I think maybe when it deteriorated from the first spirit was when they started giving all these prizes. To me, I mean, it lost what it was originally; this is just from my standpoint. Of course, Frankenstein always griped about it and still does, I guess.

Teiser: It was the city that started giving prizes, was it?

Cravath: Benny Bufano was the art commissioner. He was responsible for the city sponsored art festivals. I remember a big meeting of all the artists at the San Francisco Museum of Art in the auditorium there, and I remember that I had to speak, among others, and Gurdon Woods was then president of Artists Equity. I gave Benny Bufano credit for starting it for the city, because he did. It was when he was on the Art Commission and he was the one that stirred it up and really started it.

But then they wanted the prizes, you see, so, it's different sort of thing from what it was originally, I think. But I still think it's good. I think it's good for the city to have it.

Harroun: Isn't it juried now?

Cravath: It is juried now, yes. I don't think they'd go back to an unjuried show. I mean, I believe that the Festival is good because it brings so many people out to see the art that wouldn't otherwise, and so forth.

What happens is a so-called screening and the different organizations who show screen their own works; they're responsible. Then I think there's a general screening committee for the unaffiliated works. I think there is. So that it is juried to that extent.

Teiser: Do some people have things thrown out of it?

Cravath: Oh, yes. They must. They must if it's screened. There wouldn't be any point in screening it if they didn't screen something out.

Teiser: But it's so big.

Cravath: But that's it, and the whole art scene in San Francisco has naturally changed, as there are so many more people, and it's a different thing.
Teiser: Actually, there seem to be more people, but there really is only a slight increase in the population of the city itself since the 1930s. And it's dropped since the 1960s.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS PROGRAM

Teiser: Ruth, in connection with the Art Festivals, what do you think of the Neighborhood Arts Program? That's a kind of fractionalizing, isn't it, of civic sponsorship of the arts?

Cravath: Oh, well, yes, it divided it up a little bit, but I think it's a good idea. I do because, I mean, there's more spirit and people know things. I believe in the Neighborhood Arts Program.

Teiser: Do you think it produces any good art?

Cravath: I think it does. I think the Julian Theatre produces some very good things. That's on our hill here. Are you comparing it to the Art Festival, the civic Art Festival?

Teiser: Or the museums, or other civic endeavors in the arts.

Cravath: Well, the Art Festival is a civic endeavor and I certainly think that the Neighborhood Arts Programs compare favorably to that, but neither of them really ought to be compared with the museums, which are a different sort of thing. I mean, it's not free-for-all, popular art.

Teiser: I suppose what I'm asking is: Do you think that the Neighborhood Arts Programs and the city-wide Festival bring out artists who go on to become accomplished artists and who otherwise wouldn't have had a chance to be?

Cravath: I don't really know specifically, but I would guess that it does, Ruth. I mean, I can't give you any specific examples. I haven't been too closely associated with this Festival and these things.

Teiser: Let me put it another way then: In all the years that you've been teaching and been in the middle of art affairs in San Francisco, have you felt that young people who wanted to make careers or serious avocations of art had all the opportunity that they could use here?
Cravath: No, I don't think so. I don't think they have; I mean, because they always want to show. But I don't suppose they have anywhere. Well, I think if they want to do it, they can do it; they have an opportunity, but I don't think they have all the opportunities they could use. But I don't think they'd be prevented from painting because of limited opportunities to exhibit.

Teiser: Is it easy for a young person to develop a talent in San Francisco?

Cravath: [Laughter] I don't know how to answer that, Ruth, really. But, yes, I think so because there's the San Francisco museums that have had these programs, the Saturday programs. When I was teaching at the art school Saturday morning, the children's class, we had a program of people getting scholarships, from the museum classes to the art school, and I think some of the people got started that way. Now I don't know just what they do now, but then we had scholarships that they were able to win at the San Francisco Museum Saturday program to go to the California School of Fine Arts. I don't know whether the California School of Fine Arts has children's classes now. I believe for a while they didn't. I'm not so close to it; I don't know. But I think over the years there has been considerable encouragement.

Harroun: There has been, as you know, recently, a great deal of talk about the Performing Arts Center and there has been some controversy.

Cravath: Yes, yes. Between the Neighborhood Arts centers and that, yes.

Harroun: I wouldn't know how to judge whether everything should be put into the Performing Arts Center or whether it should be dispersed among the neighborhoods.

Cravath: If I had to vote, I'd vote for the Neighborhood Arts Centers. But, I mean, I'm in a quandary to a certain extent, but if I were forced into a corner, I think I would vote for the Neighborhood Arts Centers.
ARTISTS' ORGANIZATIONS

Teiser: Ruth, getting back to adult artists, you just mentioned Artists Equity. When did that become active here? I know you've been active in it.

Cravath: I was active. I'm not active in it right now. I mean, I am sort of retiring. But before Stackpole left, which was in 1949, I think Kuniyoshi was quite active in the East starting it, and Stackpole said, "This is what you should belong to. This is the thing." He had the forms and he gave them to me. Well, I did nothing about it. He went to Europe and then Gurdon Woods came out here and he became president of the Northern California chapter of Artists Equity Association and he built it up from an organization here of about ten people to well over a hundred. He was a very fine president and he did a lot for Artists Equity and, so, during his regime I joined Equity, which was in the early '50s.

The board meetings used to be down at my studio and I was quite active. As a matter of fact, when I moved up here, they gave me a work party one Sunday. That was marvelous, the organization. They built the door for the studio. They painted the bedroom. The women made the curtains; these bay curtains were made by Artists Equity members. Oh, they did so much work that day! It was just fantastic! And they built the little back porch, that little stoop.

It was very amusing because my father, as I think I have told you, dear soul, really didn't have any respect for artists or women, either one, and he was afraid these artists were going to do something to his property. So, he was here all day Sunday and he was so impressed with them. I had told Bob Holdeman about this. He was at one time president of Artists Equity. So he made a blueprint for the thing, and he was known as the architect, and Dad was impressed with the blueprint for the porch. They brought up Skilsaws and they built that, that Sunday, and they painted the bedroom and they made curtains for the bathroom, which were all hung before they left. It was a wonderful work party. They barbecued and they brought the food and I just made coffee all day long.

And my father watched and he was really impressed. Yes, he watched it all, and he had a much better feeling about artists
Cravath: after that because of the Skilsaw and the blueprint and what happened. [Chuckle]

Teiser: What, besides that sort of thing, did Artists Equity do for artists?

Cravath: Artists Equity was not an exhibiting organization. It does do some exhibiting now. It was concerned with the economic welfare and economic problems of artists, and it still is. It's like a union. An artist had to have professional standing to join, which was gauged by commissions or exhibiting or, I mean, evidence of a professional standing. But it's a very good idea for artists. As I say, it's a protection; it's a union.

I know that some artists who were working on big mural jobs had found it was invaluable to belong because they had an Equity membership card, which served as a union, if there were all union people working, you see, on the job.

Lately, our local Equity has done some exhibiting as a group. I mean, they have organized shows and things, which is okay. You see, originally the Art Association annuals were open to all the artists; you didn't have to be members of the Art Association. It was the big open art show that everybody wanted to get into and it gave everybody an opportunity. Well, when the museums stopped giving these big shows, there were not so many opportunities to exhibit in big shows this way, so the more shows that are organized, the better for the artists. So Equity has felt that this was part of what it should do for the artists lately.

Teiser: You said it operated kind of as a union. I don't suppose to the extent of insisting that nobody but members of Artists Equity be hired for a certain job?

Cravath: Oh, no. No, no, no. [Laughter] Not that kind of a union.

Teiser: How about the Society for Sanity in Art?

Cravath: Which became later the Society of Western Artists. Well, they had their annual show. It was always out at the de Young Museum. They were very reactionary and conservative and so the more progressive artists used to sort of make fun of them. But it has happened that with the leveling of the years I think they're
Cravath: broader. I think the organization is not quite as subject to question as it used to be aesthetically because they have some good artists who are more or less conservative who belong to it now. Does it still have its annual show at the de Young?

Harroun: I don't think so.

Cravath: No, you see, I think that just doesn't exist any more.

Teiser: I suppose one of its problems was that it seemed to be reacting against the main--

Cravath: Right. Very much. Yes, it was very much against progressive modern art or abstract art, but now you can see some abstract art from the Western Artists. You see, the standard has come up; I mean, it's leveled off a bit. They gave up the name of the Society for Sanity in Art; they realized that was not very wise, I guess, and became the Society of Western Artists, and they broadened their vision.

FROM FILBERT STREET TO STACKPOLE'S STUDIO

Teiser: Ruth, let's punctuate the end of this interview. You said Stackpole left in 1949.

Cravath: Right. He left in 1949 on the morning of some time in March, and I moved into his studio that day.

Teiser: Where had you been up to that time, just in the years previous?

Cravath: Well, in the years previous I was at 1150 Filbert Street, which Catherine remembers very well.

Teiser: You worked there?

Cravath: Yes. Well, I worked there first and then I had the little studio in your house out on Buchanan Street for a while. You remember that?

Harroun: Oh, of course!
Teiser: Briefly?

Cravath: I had a class there. I don't know how long I was there. But it was on the ground floor there. Because something happened to the Filbert Street place. Was it during the war?

Harroun: No, because I moved into the Buchanan Street property in late 1945, and that would mean the war had ended.

Cravath: Well, when did I go down to Montgomery Street, 802, then?

Harroun: You were there before that.

Cravath: Well, how did I happen to be having a studio in your basement then?

Harroun: It was when you had to move from 802, I think, and before Stackpole--

Cravath: Oh, that's it! When I gave up 802, that was it, yes.

When I first moved up to Filbert Street, I did have a studio upstairs there and I had a class there in that big room upstairs. I had linoleum on the floor and I had a class in sculpture. Well, then time went on and I wanted to have it for living quarters and the war came along and then I rented it to a couple of war workers, the big room upstairs, and to various people over the years. That was the end of its being a studio.

Harroun: But 802 Montgomery was during the war because I remember the English woman--

Cravath: Yes, Vera Nelson Jones.

Harroun: She had come here with her--

Cravath: Two little boys, yes. And she lived in my house on Filbert Street. Wasn't she there when your mother and aunt were there that summer?

Harroun: She wasn't there then.

Cravath: She wasn't?

Harroun: No. I don't know what she did then, but she was in the class at 802 Montgomery.
Cravath: She was? I'd forgotten that. Well, I had to give up 802 for some reason; I forget what. Dorothy and I had it together. Then I had the basement studio in your place.

Harroun: Yes. I think they were doing something to that building, though they had not torn that down, 802 Montgomery.

Cravath: Oh, when I gave up Filbert Street, I shared Dorr Bothwell's house on Yerba Buena Street and I didn't have a studio then. But I had the two front rooms there and I know I did a couple of portrait heads. I used the second room for a studio. I did a portrait of Mary Bolles and a child's portrait, which was a commission. That was during the period when I was doing quite a bit of teaching. I was going over to the Dominican Convent two days a week and St. Rose and--

So, from there I went to Stackpole's studio, the big studio, 716 Montgomery, 1949.

Harroun: On Yerba Buena, is that where Dorr had a sale?

Cravath: Right. Dorr had a sale, right.

Teiser: When had your children moved out of your nest?

Cravath: Oh, at that time Beth was at the hospital; she was a nurse. When I had to move from Filbert Street, Sam said, "Mom, why don't you get a studio and not have a household?" I said, "Well, I want to have a place for you." He said, "I don't care as long as you have a couch for me to sleep on." So that's how I took the studio, you see, and Beth at that time was in training at Children's Hospital and she had to live there, you see, so she'd just come home on days off. So, that was about '48 and '49. That was when they both left the nest and then Sam went to Montana.

Teiser: For the record, you'd been divorced from Sam Bell when?

Cravath: '38. The summer of '38. So, that was ten years later.

Teiser: So, then, in '49 you moved into Stackpole's and began another era.

Cravath: A decade, yes. That was a wonderful era.

Teiser: Well, we'll start with that the next time.

Cravath: Okay.
LITURGICAL ART
(Interview 6, February 27, 1975)

Teiser: Now we begin with your liturgical art. I've listed your major works so far as we know them.

Cravath: I think it's a good idea, because you have St. Theresa first; St. Theresa is the one that got me into all the liturgical work; she's responsible for it in my case, you see.*

Teiser: How did you happen to do that?

Cravath: Oh, well, Paul Ryan was architect member of the Art Commission when I was on it, so we had associated in connection with the Art Commission and we were friends for a number of years, and he had this commission. He was doing St. Basil's Church in Vallejo and he wanted a statue of St. Theresa, the Little Flower, for the patio there. So, that's how I got the commission from Paul. This was at the time of the war and then Paul was in the army and I remember sending him some sketches or something. While I worked on it, he was in the army, but by the time I finished it he was back in civilian life and he accepted it.

So that was how the Hanna Center came about, I think, because the architects, John Bolles and Mario Ciampi were aware of the St. Theresa that I had done for Vallejo, so they asked me to do the work for the Hanna Center chapel. John Bolles was then with Ward and Bolles (it was a firm), and Mario Ciampi was by himself.

Teiser: Were there many other people who could have executed such commissions at that time?

*See also pp. 148-149.
Cravath: Well, there was Elio Benvenuto, who had come from Italy, who's done quite a bit of liturgical work, and, strangely enough, I first met Elio on the scaffold at Hanna Center when I was carving the Lady of Fatima on the facade. He came up to visit Hanna Center with then Monsignor Guilfoyle, who since became Bishop Guilfoyle, and Elio was standing down at the foot of the scaffold and he just climbed right up, and he looked at me and his face fell. He thought I was an Italian sculptor that he hadn't seen for years and he'd lost track of, a friend of his, and he saw me up there so he thought he'd found her. [Laughter] But anyway, we've been friends ever since, but that was our introduction. It was so funny; the identity was wrong. [Laughter]

As you know, I carved the facade in place there. I worked on it three months in the spring.* I made the sketches in '49.

Teiser: Do I have everything you did for Hanna Center on the outline—that and the stations of the cross and a crucifix for the interior?

Cravath: Right. And then I also did one other thing which I gave in memory of my mother, which was a Sacred Heart, which is over the door, a relief. But that was not a commission; that was my gift to them.

Teiser: Did you receive a commission to do all three of these at the same time?

Cravath: It was all together.

Teiser: You were chosen to do the whole thing?

Cravath: Yes, by the architects.

Teiser: Were there many other people around besides Elio Benvenuto who could have executed such a commission?

Cravath: Well, probably, yes, I think so.

Teiser: By then you were not yet known as a liturgical artist, were you?

*See pp. 168-170.
Cravath: No. This really started me off, you might say.

Teiser: I remember this, of course, and at the time I think I asked how come the Catholics had to choose an Episcopalian to do their sculpture?

Cravath: [Laughter] Yes, someone else asked that question of some Catholic, and the response was very complimentary; he said, "Well, the church got the best they could." [Laughter]

Teiser: I remember during this period when you and Dorothy were doing a good deal of liturgical art that it confused me a little to think not only of someone in another religion, but someone who I believe had no specific religion--Dorothy--doing works that were acceptable to the church. This was a kind of philosophical point. Did that occur to anyone else?

Cravath: Well, it's rather amusing, really, because when I was working for Hanna Center, doing this work, Dorothy, who was not as sympathetic with the Catholic church as I was, said, well, didn't it hurt my conscience a little bit or something, and I said, "Not at all." [Laughter] I was delighted to do it. And then subsequently, as you know, she had the commission to do the church at Half Moon Bay and she did the great painting behind the altar and the stations of the cross. I said, "Dorothy, how about your conscience in this?" "Oh, well, that's different," she said, "I've lived down in that neighborhood and I know those people." [Laughter] It amused me very much. [Laughter] She knew those people, so it was all right for her to do it.

But a week ago Saturday when I was looking at a few of her things with Anne, there was this big chalk drawing, a head of Christ, which is quite beautiful, I think. Anne said, "You certainly could see that that wasn't done by a Catholic; no Catholic did it. You know, Mother couldn't bear to have anyone hurt," and she pointed out the fact that all the thorns were sticking away from the head. Anne noticed this. Isn't that interesting?

Teiser: Anne is a Catholic.

Cravath: Yes, she is a Catholic.

Teiser: Let me ask if this was, to your knowledge, a period--the '50s and late '40s--when the Catholic church was reassessing its aesthetics?
Cravath: I think it was, definitely. There was quite a movement. There were several artists in France, and priests; this Dominican priest in Paris was very famous for getting good artists to do the work, and P.R. Regamey [O.P.] wrote a book on it and there was a great revival of interest in good art in the Catholic church.

As a matter of fact, did you put in anything about the exhibition at the de Young Museum?

Teiser: No, not in the outline...

Cravath: Well, that was 1952, and I think this is the time to mention it.

Since it was evident that the Catholic church would have art and decoration of all the churches—the Protestant churches were being very sparse, but there was to be work in the Catholic church—and I had done a little bit, I thought that an effort should be made to introduce the church and the public to the possibilities of having local artists do work. So, I was sort of the moving spirit and the chairman of an exhibition at the de Young Museum which was entitled "Contemporary Religious Art by California Artists." It was city sponsored, so it wasn't just Catholic; it was Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and we even had the Buddhist church down there on Washington Street, you see. We had all the religions represented. That was a big project.

Anyway, that took a lot of time and energy and it was a very interesting project. Some of the works were invited. Louisa Jenkins and I took a trip to Southern California and visited quite a few artists who were working in that field, and then we knew a number of people to invite. Then the de Young wanted to have it broad and also have a juried section, so people were invited to submit to a jury. We sent out letters, not to everybody, but anybody that we heard of that was interested was invited to submit to a jury, and then there were other things that were invited outright, so that's the way it was worked.

Elizabeth Moses was very active at the museum then in the decorative arts, so she was interested in the weaving and the silver and all the things that go in a church, you see. And Ninfa Valvo was the curator of painting and sculpture, so we all worked together.
Teiser: Were you confined to smaller pieces?

Cravath: No. We had some fairly large things too. We had an enormous wooden Christ of Albert Stuart's from Southern California, and Frances Rich had done a life-sized or over-life-sized bronze of St. Francis that she brought up for the show, so we had some quite big pieces.

We set up altars and showed things. We had quite a collection of stations of the cross of different kinds.

Teiser: Did you have silver work?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Victor Ries did some beautiful things. We had quite a few artists in the crafts, you see, and Elizabeth Moses was very helpful in that field because she was well acquainted with all the craftsmen.

Teiser: Did you have vestments?

Cravath: Oh, yes. We had vestments. As a matter of fact, I'll show you a catalogue of the show.

Teiser: The Catholic Art Forum--

Cravath: That was an outgrowth, you might say, of the show at the de Young Museum. Father Monihan, who was the librarian at USF [University of San Francisco], Father William Monihan, gathered together some architects and some of the artists who'd worked for this show, and he felt that it should be carried on for the church, this idea of improving the art of the church.

So an organization known as the Catholic Art Forum was founded and we organized exhibitions. We took them to different seminaries. We had one at the Anglican Seminary in Berkeley and at St. Patrick's down on the Peninsula, and the University of Santa Clara and, oh, various organizations, and at Grace Cathedral one time we set up our show. We had this traveling show, and it was a lot of work and it was a lot of fun.

Peggy Conahan was in that group. The Catholic Art Forum functioned for ten or fifteen years. In 1968, I believe it was, it came to a slow stop and so we voted to disband. I mean, it's put to sleep. They didn't really kill the organization, but it's discontinued for the time being. But we did an awful lot in the time, really.
Teiser: Is it true that that burst of creative energy in liturgical art has now tapered off?

Cravath: I think you're right. I'm quite sure you're right because there were certain people who were very anxious that we go on, but two of the people who were the founding members, Father Monihan and Kai DuCasse, felt that we'd done what we could do and we should just call quits to it; I mean, as the organization. Paul Dachauer, who's an architect who specialized in church architecture and who was one of the presidents of the Catholic Art Forum, says that they're just not building churches, there's nothing going on in this field. So, you're quite correct in your--

Teiser: It came up with new construction?

Cravath: Right, yes.

Teiser: You said Father Monihan was--

Cravath: Father Monihan, the Jesuit of USF, was the founding father, and the other priest who was the hard worker for the Catholic Art Forum was Father Vital Vodusek, the priest of the Yugoslavian Church, who was a charming person and very devoted to art and literature, being a poet himself. He defended it to the end and he wanted us to keep it going. Father Monihan thought that we'd done our duty, I mean done all we could do about it, but dear Father Vodusek died about a year ago and, so, that was the end of that defender. [Tape off briefly.]

Father Vodusek was a very dear friend of [Ivan] Mestrovic, and he was about to retire, and his ambition was to go back to his home of Yugoslavia and perhaps be connected with a small parish and write poetry in his retirement, so we all felt very sorry that he didn't live to realize that dream of his. But, as I say, I think the fact that he was a friend of Mestrovic's, and they were very dear friends, is of interest and had quite a bit to do with our Catholic Art Forum and with his enthusiasm, you see.
WORKS FOR THE HANNA CENTER

Teiser: Let's go on to the Hanna Center. Our Lady of Fatima is a deep relief, is it?

Cravath: They're called high relief, yes. It's a ten-inch relief over the facade. I carved it in place.

Teiser: How many months did you say you worked on it?

Cravath: Let's see. I started it in February and it was unveiled in May. February, March, April, May—three months. But I lived up there while I was doing it, so I worked all the time. I had to come down to the city on Thursday afternoon or Friday. I had a class; it was something every week. I came down Thursday afternoons at first and went back on Mondays. Then I could see I wasn't going to finish it working a four-day week, so I would go back Saturday morning. I asked the priests if they objected to having anyone up on the facade before the multitude, breaking the Sabbath, working, and they said no, they had to work on Sunday too. [Laughter] So we had lots of visitors on Sunday and I remember one sort of irate sounding lady saying—I heard her below the scaffold—"How come they're working on this on Sunday?" [Laughter] But it was rather fun on Sunday because there were lots of visitors.

Teiser: How high is the figure?

Cravath: It's eleven-and-a-half to twelve feet. I'm not sure.

Teiser: So you had two levels of scaffold?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Several, several. You know, with boards up and down.

Teiser: Did you work on it alone?

Cravath: Yes, yes. I worked on that alone, but everybody in the chapel had a chance to do a little chipping on it, so they all felt they'd participated—the boys and even the nuns. I have pictures of the nuns working on it one day. They came up, and the priests—everybody. And the fellow who was the barber, who donated his services, would come out from Sonoma one day a week. He had to have his little place, and so he worked on the little boy's hair, I remember. In roughing it out, you see, there is so much work to do, it was very safe to have help.
Teiser: The figure is Our Lady of Fatima and--

Cravath: Three children, a boy and the two girls.

Teiser: What is the material?

Cravath: It's a stone that came from France. It's a great big piece of it and the name of it was Crezannes Antoire and it's the only stuff of the kind that I've ever carved. It was a little bit uneven; there were some very hard places in it. It wasn't awfully easy to carve, but it worked out.

Teiser: Is that a frequent kind of activity, carving that large a piece on that high a wall? It's over the door.

Cravath: Over the front door, yes. You've seen it, haven't you?

Teiser: Oh, yes. I'm trying to get on tape, however--

Cravath: [Laughter] Oh, I see! No, it's not too usual to have them carved in place. I was very anxious to do that because that was the light that it was going to exist in, and it was a wonderful place to work; the spring in the Valley of the Moon, and the meadow larks singing--it was a very pleasant three months for me.

Teiser: How long can you work on a scaffold at a time?

Cravath: Well, at that time, of course, I had absolutely no other responsibilities; I was fed and taken care of. I would start to work right after breakfast, which would be a little after eight, and stop for lunch. Dinner was rather early and I'd work in the afternoon till four-thirty or five. So I worked a full day.

Teiser: Working alone, you had to--

Cravath: I shouldn't say I did absolutely work alone, because the first week or the first ten days I had Bernasconi, the French stonecutter, helping me to do a lot of roughing it out. As a matter of fact, I had never worked with a compressor before, and I was pretty scared the first days up there. And we found out that although there were two hoses, the equipment didn't pump up enough energy for two people to work, so I had him use the compressor, and then I soon became very familiar with
Cravath: it after he left. But I really did have that help, so I shouldn't say I was working completely alone. But after the first week or ten days, I was working alone.

Teiser: That means whenever you needed anything you would have to climb down and get it?

Cravath: Yes, and climb down and go and look at it. Go down to get away and look at it.

Teiser: That's a very vigorous--

Cravath: I had a very slender figure during that time. I lost a lot of weight and all my clothes became too loose. [Laughter]

Teiser: Do you consider that one of your major works, Ruth?

Cravath: Yes, I think I do, that and the Starr King down here in the yard that I always consider one of my major works, the one I'm restoring now. We'll come to that later.

Teiser: The Stations of the Cross then, that you did at the Hanna Center were they based upon your own research, or did you have to have any special advice? Are there some fine points--?

Cravath: Well, there are just certain set stations that are certain events in the crucifixion, you see. That's all. And then there are all sorts of meditations that people have written on them. But it was my own interpretation of these events. I went through the New Testament very, very carefully and found--I think only eight of the fourteen can you find mentioned in the New Testament. I had the Catholic Bible, the Douay, which is just the same practically.

Many of them are legendary, like Veronica and so forth. But there are eight of the fourteen, I believe, that are mentioned in the New Testament, so I combed the New Testament, because I wanted to do my own interpretation of it, which was quite agreeable. The only thing that the priests wanted, the thing that was specified at first, was that they wanted the entire figure of Christ in each one. So, that was limiting, but limitations are a challenge.
Teiser: That's not always done then?

Cravath: Oh, no, no. I mean, Mary Erckenbrack did the stations of the cross for the Sisters' Chapel, the private chapel in the convent, at Hanna Center there, which are very stunning. They're ceramic stations, and they're details with hands or just enough symbols. No, it isn't necessary, but that was what these priests wanted, the whole figure of Christ.

That was a problem in design. I liked having them all the same scale, but it meant that for certain stations, such as the crucifixion, to get the whole figure in necessitated a different scale with the three figures.

Father Manning from San Jose had seen the stations at Hanna Center and he liked them very much. I had the cartoons and the designs, and I'd made an arrangement with the priests there if any other church wanted them, they'd be known as the Hanna Center stations, and Hanna Center would get a commission. Well, they liked that idea very much, because they were already designed, you see. So I did them for this church in San Jose, St. Leo's.

I'm very glad to have this opportunity to go on tape recording what happened to them. Father Manning was very nice and appreciative, and he let me change the scale of a couple and use just part of the figure, so it kept them all in the same scale. I mean, he didn't insist that the whole figure of Christ be in each station.

[Interruption]

Well, I had been including the St. Leo's stations when asked to give lists of my work, and I think it was a couple of years ago a friend of mine was visiting some churches in San Jose. I had recently done a crucifix for the Mexican church down there, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and she wanted to show this friend that, so she thought, well, she'd make the rounds and go to St. Leo's and see my stations of the cross. This was Nancy Bray. When she came home, she called me and she said, "I didn't remember that your stations were partly mosaic, were mosaics," and I said, "They certainly weren't." She described the stations that were there and they weren't mine at all, and I said, "Well, it must be the wrong church." No, it was St. Leo's and she was sure it was the address and I just couldn't believe it. But she was convinced that it was St. Leo's Church.
Cravath: So I went down there with Kai DuCasse and sure enough, sure enough, there are other stations over mine.

Teiser: There are others over yours?

Cravath: Yes, over them, because you can see-- These were on radio black marble, the ones I carved for San Jose. The ones at Hanna Center are chocolate Tennessee, which are brown. But you can see the polished black marble around the edges, part of the frame, and obviously something-- I don't know whether Father Manning went to his reward or went elsewhere and they had a new priest and somebody wanted some other stations of the cross. As a matter of fact, the lighting there was not too successful for the carving and, I mean, I can see where at certain times of day they would think they didn't read too well. This is understandable. However, it was somewhat startling to find that mine were covered up, and I was greatly comforted by remembering Dorothy and me in one of the churches in Florence in 1959, a little church. We were looking around and the sexton came out. I guess he realized we were artists or particularly interested in what we were seeing, because he beckoned to us and he took us over and here was a large oil painting of a Baroque period and it was hinged. He opened it up and underneath was a Giotto fresco.

Harroun: Oh, no!

Cravath: Yes. I meant to investigate that when I was in Florence last time and see if the Giotto fresco is now exposed, and that is one of the things I didn't get around to doing when I was there last year. [Laughter] But I was comforted when I thought of that. So, if anybody ever decides to peer under these stations, they'll find Cravath's Hanna Center stations, underneath. [Laughter] But, as I say, I was happy to know about it because I don't know how many times that list had been given out. [Laughter]

Teiser: But what about the crucifix at Hanna Center?

Cravath: Oh, the crucifix at Hanna Center. Well, the stations of the cross and the facade had all worked very smoothly. I had to work with Monsignor Flanagan, who was the head of the Catholic Social Services, and Father O'Connor, who was the director of Hanna Center at the time, a wonderful person, and they were very appreciative. There were never any problems about design. Everything was accepted and everybody was happy.
Cravath: The other priest there was Father Reagan who, interestingly enough, was subsequently the priest down at Dorothy's church in Half Moon Bay, Our Lady of the Pillar. Anyway, I was very fond of Father Reagan, but his taste in art was not exactly what some people have. But he said to me, I remember, that the stations had far surpassed his fondest expectations. So I felt pretty secure.

Father O'Connor turned over the crucifix problem to him. He was to come and see it and pass on it and so forth. Well, what a time I had, because Father Reagan's idea of a crucifix was one of these, you know, painted, flesh-colored... And my crucifix I made directly in this hydrocal and cement recipe and it wasn't polished. It was slightly rough, and he said it looked like "a child had done it--of course, a very talented child," and he didn't accept it.

Mario Ciampi, the architect, who is very articulate and loves to talk (and he talks very well) went up to Hanna Center and pled with Father Reagan, and tried to indoctrinate him that it really was a work of art or something, but Father Reagan was unconvinced. It was held up.

So here I was. It was practically finished and I didn't compromise, but I did as much as my conscience would let me toward making it acceptable to him. So then I took pictures of it, finished, up to show--I hated to go over his head, but it was sort of an impasse--Father O'Connor, and it was really quite an amusing interview because Father O'Connor was so surprised. He said, "Well, I didn't know it would be like this. Why, I like this." But from what Father Reagan said, he thought so and so and so and so. So, it was accepted. [Laughter]

Teiser: Was that why Father Reagan was sent to Half Moon Bay? [Laughter]

Cravath: [Laughter] Oh, no! Oh, dear! Well, I was sorry about that because he was a good person for that job and he loved Hanna Center and I liked Father Reagan. That was a surprise, really, his reaction. He hadn't had the authority to say anything before, but when he was given it he used it! [Laughter]

Teiser: The crucifix is monochrome?

Cravath: Yes. Well, as a matter of fact, originally the idea was that it would be electroplated bronze, that it would be a bronze crucifix. I went to the electroplating people and they said
Cravath: they couldn't electroplate pure hydrocal. I was going to build it up in hydrocal, which is white like plaster and works the same way, but it's a hard material, and then have it electroplated, which I had done with a portrait head before. So I thought it was possible, but they wouldn't undertake it; they said there would have to be a certain amount of cement in it, a portion of cement. So I did a lot of experiments with different proportions of cement and hydrocal, and it came out to be rather a pleasant gray color and it seemed like a genuine thing, so they were persuaded to accept it in that material, which I liked because it wasn't fake bronze. I mean it wasn't surface bronze; it was the material it was made in. So it exists in that material, which is my composition of Portland cement and hydrocal just built up directly.

Teiser: Did you do that here in the city?

Cravath: I did that in the stoneyard on Montgomery Street, yes. That was where Father Reagan came to visit. [Chuckle]

Teiser: Then next on the outline is St. Leo's, which we've discussed.* That was finished in 1952, we have here.

Cravath: Well, one of the St. Leo's stations of the cross was in the show at the de Young Museum.

Teiser: So they didn't go into place till after that show?

Cravath: Not until after that show, no.

WORKS FOR ST. PETER'S, REDWOOD CITY

Teiser: The next thing I have is St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Redwood City, which you and Dorothy both worked on, and I didn't list here the date of completion.

Cravath: Well, I remember that we were working on that when we were organizing the religious art show at the de Young Museum. It was 1952.

*Pp. 171-172.
Teiser: How did you happen to get that commission at St. Peter's? Was that again through an architect?

Cravath: Well, they had an architect, but I think that came through Hanna Center because there were some people in the Episcopal Church, the Church of the Advent, that were interested in liturgical art and had followed my career in Hanna Center and the stations, so that some of the Episcopal clergy knew that I did this kind of thing. And that crucifix was my commission, you see, but I never could have done it without Dorothy because she was an expert woodcarver. I hadn't carved wood. I designed it, but she really did the main part of the execution, so it was a joint project.

Teiser: This was the altar crucifix?

Cravath: The crucifix over the altar, yes.

Teiser: Was that the first time you had actually worked with Dorothy?

Cravath: Well, in the Players Club years and years before when we did the sets and costumes we worked together on that for several years. Oh, yes, I had worked with her, but not on a piece of sculpture.

Teiser: You did the design for the crucifix, you said.

Cravath: Yes, I did. And in executing it, it was modified somewhat.

Teiser: Dorothy executed it?

Cravath: Yes. Well, I worked on it some too, but Dorothy really executed it.

Teiser: Did Dorothy make any significant changes as she worked on it?

Cravath: No.

Teiser: When you follow your own designs, do you modify them as you work?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Yes, I do.

Teiser: Then on the facade--?

Cravath: On the facade of St. Peter's is Dorothy's mosaic cross. Yes.
Cravath: I have pictures of it here, which I can show you. It's a great mosaic cross with the different symbols of St. Peter. There's the cock and the mitre for the bishop, and fish, lots of fish, and it's very rich in symbols, in the shape of a Latin cross.*

Teiser: How did she happen to--?

Cravath: Well, because she had worked with me they knew her, you see, well. I mean, it was for the same people, the commission.

Teiser: I see. So there were two different commissions?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Entirely separate. Her commission was completely separate. I had nothing to do with it.

Teiser: The crucifix over the altar was done first?

Cravath: That was my commission. That was done first, yes. After that they commissioned Dorothy to do this mosaic over the door, this great panel over the door. So she designed that and executed it.

Teiser: So you had no part in that?

Cravath: No. I'm sorry I can't take any credit for it. I'd love to! [Laughter] I think it's magnificent.

Teiser: Was your work there satisfactory to you, at St. Peter's?

Cravath: Yes. Oh, yes.

Harroun: Who was the minister?

Cravath: Father Bowes, Peter Bowes. He was really very interested in art. He was visually minded.

*See also p. 307.
OTHER RELIGIOUS ART WORKS

Teiser: What was Blessed Martin de Porres?

Cravath: Blessed Martin de Porres? He's now, as you know, St. Martin; he's been canonized since I did the little statue of him. Louisa Jenkins got me into that. There are these friendship houses in various parts of the country. There's one in Chicago. As a matter of fact, there's one down here that I should visit since it's named, I think, Martin de Porres. There was a charming young woman who worked in the Portland friendship house and they wanted a statue of Martin de Porres. I think Louisa contributed something, and I contributed considerably because I did it for a very modest sum.

I made it directly in terra cotta and it was fired. There was a slight discrepancy. It cracked one place on the habit, but that was fixed. So, they had the original, but before it went to Portland I had a piece-mold made of it and so I have sold several reproductions; I mean, the Serra Shop did.

Teiser: The Serra Shop?

Cravath: Junipero Serra Shop.* In my scrapbook, you probably saw a picture of it in a Dominican publication in the Middle West.

Teiser: You mentioned Louisa Jenkins. She was and she is an artist?

Cravath: Right. And she became very famous for her mosaics in the '50s. She did a set of stations of the cross for the Christian Brothers at Mont La Salle. And then she did work for Mt. Angel, the Benedictines up in Oregon, some mosaics. She was very much interested in liturgical art.

Teiser: She herself is a Catholic, isn't she?

Cravath: Right. She was a convert, yes.

Teiser: And was she a friend of yours earlier?

Cravath: We became friends when we were working on this show for the de Young Museum. I first met her at Beatrice Ryan's and it was

*of San Francisco.
Cravath: after I had done the work for Hanna Center. She knew I was interested in liturgical art and she was interested in it and we sort of got together about the idea of the show. She worked on it. She was living in the city in the beginning and then she moved away, so she wasn't as active as she would have been, but it was partly her idea that we do it, the show at the de Young.

Teiser: You mentioned Our Lady of Guadalupe in San Jose.

Cravath: Well, it was 1968. That belongs to the Potrero Hill era.*

Teiser: Then, a relief of St. Francis I saw photographs of in your scrapbook.

Cravath: Yes. I always call that the fifteenth station of the cross because when I did the stations for Hanna Center, of chocolate Tennessee marble, the marble was procured from Musto-Keenan down on North Point [Street]. They'd been my friends for years and I'd been getting marble from them. Vermont Marble Company had provided the stone for the facade of Hanna Center and most of the work that they'd been doing there, but the architects were willing that I get the Hanna Center stations marble from Musto-Keenan.

So I went down there. Old Guido Musto was a character and he knew that Vermont was doing the other work for Hanna Center. He was, of course, a good Catholic, and he said, "Why are they having those Presbyterians?" Every time I went in about my marble, he sputtered about the Presbyterians that were providing the other stone for the facade. [Laughter] At least he was slightly comforted that he could provide the stone for the stations, you see, because he was conveniently located to me geographically too.

Anyway, I got the marble from them and I had done six of the stations of the cross and I telephoned to them and I said that I was ready for the other eight pieces, that I had completed these, and Mr. [Floyd] Lyman said, "Well, we've got nine for you." I said, "Don't tell me. There's just fourteen stations of the cross and I've done six of them." He said, "Oh, haven't you heard? The new administration made another one."

*See pp. 252-254.
Cravath: So when they delivered the slabs they delivered the extra one, and what happened was that when they were slicing them and polishing them, they thought, 'Well, now, she will probably break one.' I imagine this was what they thought, and when I called they were going to be all ready with the extra one, so they gave it to me for a present, did Musto-Keenan Company.

I'd always been interested in St. Francis, so I carved the St. Francis.* So it's the same material and the same size as the Hanna Center stations. That was in the religious art show at the de Young Museum. That and one station of the cross were my contributions to the show.

Teiser: Which station was it?

Cravath: I think it was the tenth. One of the St. Leo's stations, in black marble.

The St. Francis had traveled around for religious art shows up until about two years ago when he finally came to his final resting place at St. Francis' Episcopal Church in San Francisco. It was the second time that they had borrowed it for an exhibition and when they returned the other piece, which was a mosaic--we're jumping ahead, but this is part of the St. Francis story--the woman said, 'Well, we're just bringing one back because Mrs. Thornton Hinkle, a member of the congregation, has purchased St. Francis for the church.' So, it has been installed and there's a special light on it and I'm very pleased, very pleased that he's found a permanent home in a church, and in an Episcopal church. So it's very nice.

Teiser: What is La Madonna del Rebozo?

Cravath: Oh, yes. She's down in the studio now. I did her when I came home from Mexico, my first trip to Mexico, which was '54. I was so impressed with the Mexican women and their rebozos that they wrapped the babies in and did everything with. So that's why I call it the "Madonna del Rebozo," because there's a rebozo from Oaxaca carved in marble, and I'll take you down and prove it to you after we finish this interview. [Laughter]

*Completed in 1953.
Teiser: You did that for your own pleasure?

Cravath: On my own, that's right.

Teiser: The unicorn is a relief, is it not?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: Tell about that, would you?

Cravath: Yes. I did the unicorn for an exhibition at Grace Cathedral called "Church Art Today." They had two exhibitions of religious art at the cathedral. One was in '57 when I did the unicorn. I was still on Montgomery Street. The other one was after I had moved up here in 1960. But, anyway, I did the unicorn for that first exhibit and I got--what?--second prize in sculpture. The unicorn, of course, is a symbol of Christ. It subsequently was purchased by a chap who was going to Harvard University, Sean Palfrey, and it's back there. He saw it in my studio.

Teiser: He just wanted it to take to college?

Cravath: He just wanted it. He'd been drinking quite a bit of wine and he called me up, so I thought, "Well, you'd better wait and see." You know, people have expansive ideas sometimes under the influence of wine. I didn't hear again and he went back East. He'd said he wanted it and then he telephoned me once some time and I thought, "Well, he's maybe been drinking again." Finally I got a letter from him with a check. [Laughter] He made good, so I sent it to him.

Teiser: A student?

Cravath: A student.

Teiser: I was about to ask you about the Archangel Gabriel at the Chapel of the Chimes.

Cravath: Yes. And I suggested that if there was anything else in the '50s that you wanted to discuss we'd put that down because that was the last work in the stoneyard before I moved to Potrero Hill.*

*See pp. 203-204 for discussion of the Archangel Gabriel figure.
Teiser: I was trying to cover all the liturgical work.

Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, of course, the Archangel Gabriel is liturgical, but also the first commission I had up here was liturgical, even more so, St. Dominic's, so--

Teiser: All right. Well, let's then say that--

Cravath: The liturgical work was not all done in the '50s because I did all those eighty-eight mosaic panels for a Sunday school after I moved up here.

Teiser: Yes. Well, did you do any other liturgical work in that period?

Cravath: Well, quite minor. Yes, I did several altarpieces because by that time the architects were aware of my work. I did for Norman Blanchard two panels for a church in Redwood City not far from St. Peter's. The pelican and the phoenix I did for two side altars.

Teiser: What church was this?

Cravath: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

And then I did a panel for the altar of St. Stephen's Church in San Francisco. It was a new church. It was connected with a school and they were using their gymnasium or something for the church temporarily, and I don't know what's happened since then. They've probably built another, but I did an Agnus Dei for their altarpiece, a Lamb of God, a little lamb. It's a carving in Hopeville marble. Those were done and they were minor things. They were reliefs, you see.

INDIVIDUAL COMMISSIONS

Cravath: Abraham Lincoln is the next one you have on your list.

Teiser: Yes. Did that come before the Glaser Brothers portraits?

Cravath: I think so.

Teiser: That was a commission?
Cravath: Yes. James Mitchell was the architect. It was for the Lincoln Elementary School in Burlingame; it's on the exterior of the Lincoln Elementary School.

Teiser: It's a relief?

Cravath: It's a relief. It's forty-two inches square and it's Abraham Lincoln with a couple of children. For school children, elementary school, they like it if you incorporate them in the work. They liked Starr King with children. It means more to them, you see, and it enriched the design to have children with him. So that was the idea. It was not supposed to be Abraham Lincoln's children. Somebody had questioned that. [Laughter] But it was just to relate--I mean, the name of their school and the children themselves. That's in Tennessee marble, which, as you gather, is one of my favorite materials. So many of these things are in Tennessee marble.

Teiser: Is it difficult to work?

Cravath: No, no. It's quite hard and firm, but very nice to carve. I like to carve it.

Teiser: You mentioned that you had learned to use a pneumatic chisel at Hanna Center. Have you used it since?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Continually. It's in the basement here now.

Teiser: Can you use it on a small work?

Cravath: Yes, because you have small hammers and large hammers and various sizes of tools. It cuts very evenly. You work by air. The human hand is not as even in cutting, so it's very good for ticklish work sometimes because it hammers so evenly.

Teiser: Can you use it on a relief?

Cravath: Oh, a great deal on a relief, yes. Yes, I've used it ever since Hanna Center. I first used it on the facade at Hanna Center and I had it up there for three months. So, after that, it was installed back in the stoneyard and I've used it continually ever since 1949. It was Ralph Stackpole's compressor, a great big elephant.

Teiser: The Glaser Brothers portraits may have been a very minor commission. I just happened to see it in your scrapbook.
Cravath: Yes. That work was kind of amusing. John Bolles was the architect of their building on--I believe it's Howard Street. They wanted portraits of the two Glaser Brothers outside as a decoration just outside the door. It was to be cast in aluminum for some reason or other; I don't know why not bronze, but Greenberg Brothers were friends of theirs and they were going to cast it. I don't really know the reason for aluminum, but that was what they wanted, and I'm rather sorry because I think it would look better in bronze, but it exists there in aluminum.

But I always, in doing relief portrait, like to do a direct profile, and if there are two people have one sort of overlapping the other. This wouldn't do for them because they had to have equal importance, so it was a problem to design them, you see [laughter], two of them facing each other. I think I used tobacco leaves to unify the design.* So they were contented. There were the two of them, and one of them kept looking like Stalin. I had photographs, lots of photographs, to work from and he just looked so much like him it bothered me a little bit. When I was down in their office, the nephew or descendant, the one who'd ordered it, said, "You know, my uncle looked just exactly like Stalin," and I was greatly relieved. [Laughter] I had been successful! And he did! I mean, I didn't know that I was supposed to make him look that way, but apparently it looked like he did because they were pleased.

Teiser: These men were not alive at the time?

Cravath: No. They were the founders, I think. His father and his uncle, I believe, were the Glaser Brothers, the tobacco people. If you're ever driving by their building, stop and look and see. [Chuckle]

Teiser: Were there other commissions during this period--before we get to the Starr King and the IBM commissions?

Cravath: Well, some time in that period I did a portrait of Louise Goodman, Michael Goodman's daughter. I had done Mike when Dorothy and I shared the studio at 802 Montgomery Street. What was that? In the '40s? I had done him at that time and the family wanted to have a companion piece of their daughter, so I did that portrait of Louise.

*The firm is a wholesale cigar company.
Cravath: You know, I've done quite a few portraits from time to
time, but I don't consider an individual portrait a major work
necessarily, not even the Glaser Brothers. [Laughter]

THE STARR KING STATUE

Teiser: How did the Starr King commission come to you? I suppose
that's the next important thing.

Cravath: Yes. To me that really is one of the most important things
that I've done.

Teiser: How did the commission come to you?

Cravath: It was from Norman Blanchard. Norman was the architect of St.
Leo's Church--he is retired and I bet he doesn't know what
happened to the stations--and also the church in Redwood City.
I had done several jobs for him, and he was the architect of
the Starr King Elementary School, which is here on Potrero
Hill. The city was putting money into the art in public schools
at the time and this school fell heir to two things--the mosaic
of Helen Bruton's next to the door and the statue of Starr King
and the two children, as I incorporated it. It was 1954, the
time of the official school integration, so I had a white child
and a black child with Starr King in the group.

That's almost eight feet high and it's a group. It weighs
several tons and I worked on that for about a year. That really
took a lot of time.

Teiser: It took a lot of space, as I recall it.

Cravath: Yes! [Laughter]

Teiser: And a lot of drayage. I remember we were there when they--

Cravath: Took it away, yes. You recorded it with your camera.

Teiser: But it must have been even harder to bring the stone in the
first place.

Cravath: Well, they didn't have to be very careful of it, you see. I
mean, you know, it was just this piece of stone.
Teiser: Did you have help on that work?

Cravath: Yes, I did have a helper on that, Frank Wasco, who was a young man who came to see me. He wanted to have some actual experience and it was very amusing. He came one night, I think, when I was having a class, and I think he wasn't very keen on working for a woman or something. I said that I would probably be needing help and I was rather open to having him. He wanted to work, but he didn't warm up to it much, so I thought, "Well, that's that." And the next day I found a letter in my mailbox, personally delivered. He was working on the waterfront for the longshoremen at the time and he was eager to be a sculptor. He had studied with Elah Hale Hays across the Bay and he'd studied with Rico [Frederico] Le Brun, and he was quite serious. The letter was quite charming. I hope I've kept it. I don't know. But he said maybe I'd remember a rather opinionated young man that had called on me, and he realized, I think, and he had second thoughts and so he really asked to work as an apprentice and with no pay, just for the experience.

He was very good help. He was there every Saturday morning at eight o'clock. He'd work Saturdays and Sundays and holidays. So I gave him a piece of marble and the tools and let him do something on his own. So the weekends he was there he carved something for himself too. But he stayed with it till the end. He was a good worker.

Teiser: What kind of work does an apprentice do on a figure like that?

Cravath: Oh, there is lots of roughing out to do, you see, and I would mark out areas to cut out in roughing it out. Right at the end there wasn't so much; I mean, the finishing I did. But he did all the finishing around the base. He got to be very good.

I didn't explain things very well to him though because he made one rather grave error. I remember it was on the Fourth of July when he was working, because he would come on holidays; he really was most helpful. I had indicated an area to be cut across like this [gestures]. I'd marked here and here, you see, and I thought he understood. I had company; someone had come to visit me and I was upstairs. When I came down, he'd cut a big square out like this [gestures], which included the little girl's heel here; he'd cut that out. So I had to redesign it. But this sort of thing happens often. He felt, of course,
Cravath: Absolutely sick about it and I felt sorrier for him than I did for myself in a way because I was able to change the position of her foot and redesign it. So it's all right, but it wasn't the way I'd originally intended it. Every time he looked at that foot he had a pain, he said. But he was a very good, conscientious helper.

I think he's living in South America now. I'm not sure. He married a South American girl.

Teiser: Is he a sculptor?

Cravath: I don't know what he's doing now. I've seen him only once since I've been up here on the hill and I don't know what happened to him.

Teiser: I think I met Elio Benvenuto in your stoneyard when you were working on that.

Cravath: I don't know. You know, he's with the city now, with the Art Commission, and he's been the director of the Art Festivals for a number of years. Ever since Martin Snipper became the secretary of the Art Commission, Elio has been the director of the Art Festivals.

Teiser: Did we meet Spero Anargyros when you were working on Starr King?

Cravath: Well, didn't you take the pictures of Spero and Sam loading my IBM*--? I have a whole series of beautiful pictures of Spero and Sam loading these on the truck to ship to San Jose.

Teiser: Maybe that's when we met him.

Cravath: Well, Spero is my very good friend and he's my technical adviser always. He's very expert.

Teiser: Has he been in San Francisco for many years?

Cravath: I think he came to San Francisco in the '40s. Now, the first time I ever met Spero was when he made the armature for the crucifix that I did for Hanna Center, which was in about 1950. I don't know how long he'd been here, but Mary Erckenbrack introduced him and that was the first time I'd ever met him.

*See pp. 196-199.
Cravath: Ever since then he's been an invaluable friend and adviser and helper. He supervised putting Starr King under the tree here.*

Teiser: I see. What sort of work does he do himself?

Cravath: He does very traditional sculpture.

Teiser: Back to Starr King. You worked on it for only a year. It seems impossible that you could do that big a thing in only a year's time.

Cravath: Well, I had designed it before, and I always seem to do better designing sculpture in the round in the round, making little sketches rather than drawings; I can't seem to express what it will be like in a drawing.

The first design that I had made was similar; I mean, the three figures, a boy and a girl and St. Francis, because it was for San Francisco, because you know sculptors love that Franciscan habit. I had St. Francis with dove in hand and the boy and the girl for the school, but the school board thought St. Francis was too religious a figure for a public school. Of course, Thomas Starr King was a clergyman too. There are two San Franciscans in Statuary Hall in Washington and one of them is Junipero Serra and one is Thomas Starr King and they're both clergymen.

But anyway, that was neither here nor there, so all I did was that, since they had seemed to like the design and the arrangement, you know, I just made a Unitarian out of St. Francis. [Laughter] As Dorr Bothwell said, St. Francis must be spinning in his grave. But the same idea, because the long coat of the clergymen of that period helped the design; so that's what I did.

Harroun: I have a biography of Starr King with a photograph of him, and I think I loaned it to you at that time, and he looks very much like Starr King.

Cravath: Well, that's good. I hoped to make him look like Starr King. I had the one photograph that seemed a good photograph of him, which was a front view. I never was able to get any side views. I went over to Starr King School of the Ministry and, of course,

*See p. 192.
Cravath: to the Unitarian Church here and I don't think a profile photograph exists of him. Anyway, that's how it came to be Starr King.

I had the stone picked out, I believe, before I designed it. So I designed something to fit the stone. I found it out in South San Francisco, in a stoneyard out there.

Teiser: What stone is it?

Cravath: That also is a stone that came from Burgundy, from France. Interestingly enough, when I finished it in the stoneyard before it was moved to the school, I had a little party and invited architects and people interested, and some museum people to come and see it. Tommy Howe* had a visitor at the time who was from, I believe, the Louvre, or some place in France. He came with him and he recognized the stone as coming from Burgundy. That was rather interesting.

Teiser: What is it called, Pouleret Roumage?

Cravath: The other was Crezannes Antoire, the Hanna Center facade, and this is Pouleret Roumage.

So I had made the first little model, you see, and then the second one was Starr King instead of St. Francis, and that was accepted by the school board. So then I proceeded.

Teiser: The school had been named the Starr King School in the first place?

Cravath: Oh, yes, that was the name of the school.

Then I proceeded to make the quarter-scale working model, you see, but this was done before we started cutting it, and all of that business takes several months.

Teiser: Do you always make a quarter-scale model?

Cravath: Yes, dear, because I can only multiply by two and four. [Laughter] Quarter-scale is a good scale to work from.

Teiser: What did you make the model out of?

*Thomas Carr Howe
This model is made out of hydrocal and vermiculite with a little color in it that made it look like the stone quite a bit.

It's good that you made it of such long-lasting material since you, I presume, keep looking at it. [Laughter] Do you use it now?

[Laughter] Well, I don't refer to it very much now, no, because the damage has to be repaired on the stone. I do once in a while, but not much.

Well, let's take Starr King all the way through up to the present. It was put in place and unveiled with a certain amount of fanfare?

Oh, no. It wasn't, no. I'm glad also to have an opportunity [laughter] to put this grievance on tape.

You finished it when it was in place, did you?

No, the only work I did was to tool the base that they made, a concrete base. No, I finished it in the stoneyard and I think you photographed the removal of it and it was brought up here to the school and a pedestal had been made for it, a little pedestal, in front of the school, of concrete, and they had pipes and they drilled the holes and it was installed, you know, all securely installed.

Then I did tool that base to make it harmonize a little better, with a nine-point tool. That's all I did in place. That was only a day's work or something like that.

So, the non-grand unveiling--

Well, the thing was that the artists living on the hill have an exhibit every year, in Library Week. Gurdon Woods, who was the director of the art school, was living up here and a couple of other artists wanted to have an unveiling of it in Library Week because this was up here. So Gurdon spoke to the school board about it or something and they said, well, they didn't think we should steal their party; they were going to have a dedication or something. So he naturally bowed out. That was the last we heard of it. And when I was over there--I don't know whether I was working on the base or what it was--but afterwards the caretaker over there said, "Oh, they dedicated
They dedicated the building. There was nothing done about the statue. They didn't even inform me or the architect, which is rather amusing when somebody wanted to have a little ceremony. But I had my own unveiling, which was more satisfactory, the morning that it was installed because it was all wrapped up as it came up from the studio. We waited a long time for the crane to come to pull it up. You see, it was on the truck and it was lying down and it was all wrapped up. Then the crane came and it was put in place and the blankets were taken off of it, so that was the unveiling. Some of the children were standing around and I'll never forget they said, "Oh, there's children there!" I mean, it was a real acceptance, you know. I thought, "Well, this is a better unveiling than a fanfare," because they just sort of gasped and their pleasure—they accepted it, so I was happy. That was a real one, but I thought it was rather amusing about the official unveiling. [Chuckles]

Teiser: So, how long did it stay intact—before the vandalism started?

Cravath: For years, for years. I remember the men who installed it said, "Oh, it won't last long up here," and they talked about it. It was placed in '55 and I think it was about twelve years when the first vandalism occurred. Somebody reported to me that the noses had been knocked off. The city had me restore that in place; I mean, at Starr King school.

Teiser: All three figures?

Cravath: All three figures. Well, the little boy's nose wasn't badly damaged; it wasn't really knocked off. The little girl's nose was knocked off. Starr King's nose was knocked off.

Harroun: How could they do it?

Cravath: Well, somebody did it with a tool. As a matter of fact, I found a chisel buried in the ground beside it that had been used for this first vandalism. But at that time it was—let's see. Well, there was one piece knocked off one of the toes, and the noses, and the worst part was Starr King's mouth. But anyway I restored all the damage that first time in place.

The children brought the scaffold out every morning for me and there was great cooperation. They had a remarkable
Cravath: principal at the time. She had the children come over here and get my scaffolding. She made them cooperate. I was going to hire some truck to bring it over. I said did she know of a trucking company in the neighborhood. "No," she said, "the children will do it."

So a whole big class of them came, and I have photographs of them going down the street, carrying the planks and the sawhorses and everything. And then when it was all over they carried it back again. It was in the morning, and I asked the vice-principal who came with them if it was in order to have ice cream in the morning and she assured me it was [laughter], so we had an ice cream party and they were just darling! They cleaned everything up and it was a very pleasant experience because they had a very cooperative principal.

Teiser: Was it on that occasion that you made the mosaics at the base?

Cravath: It was after that. Of course, there was planting around it which wasn't too well cared for, and in the rainy season there was irresistibly delicious mud all around there, and then mud was thrown at the building as well as at Starr King; you know, you'd find it. So I said that if there was a solid pavement of mosaic around there, there would be no mud, you see, and the children would make the pebble mosaics. Well, you took pictures of that.

Harroun: Yes.

Teiser: But explain it.

Cravath: So the principal, Mrs. [Lois] Watson, thought that was a fine idea and the school prepared the ground, put a rough concrete foundation over it, and we didn't get around to doing the mosaics that year. The next year they had a new principal who wasn't so sympathetic, but I'm stubborn and we were determined to do it. At that time they had an art expert, a girl teaching, and she was a great help. So we organized it together and each class designed a panel; that is, not the kindergarten or the first grade or the second grade, but from the third grade up each class designed several panels and the children used their designs to make pebble mosaics in cement.

They had to be made in the gymnasium, and they were very wise because they knew they wouldn't survive vandalism with the wet concrete outside. So we made all the panels in the
Cravath: gymnasium and then the city had them installed in cement. They placed them alternating, a plain area of cement and the panels. We left a place all around for a border because I insisted that absolutely everybody in the school participate in some way--every kindergarten child and every primary child and all the teachers. Everybody put a pebble in--including the maintenance men--everybody who had something to do with the school. So we had the little kindergarten people lined up and we put fresh cement in and they put the pebbles in the border, so everybody worked on it.

Teiser: Part of your idea at that time, I remember, was to make the children interested in protecting those things.

Cravath: Right, yes.

Teiser: So--?

Cravath: Well, unfortunately, some of the pebbles were pulled out--by older people, presumably. But I was afraid not to have everybody in the school participate, because I thought anybody who didn't might be jealous. So I think that the vandalism was done by older people, not the kids in the school, because they were rather proud of what they did.

Teiser: And then what?

Cravath: Then the next thing was one beautiful Saturday afternoon I was coming up from the Peninsula with a friend who had never seen the statue. We were driving up and she was bringing me home and so I said, "Well, this is the best time of day to see the statue; the light's on it." So we swung by to see it and I'll never forget it! It was so badly mutilated, so badly vandalized, that I thought it was hopeless, that they'd just have to scrap the whole thing. But the school board wanted to have it restored and I thought, "Well, if it's going to be restored, I don't want anybody else to do it."

So they moved it from the school to my stoneyard and that I wish I had a movie of because a crane brought it up over the back fence, this great hydraulic crane, and it swung around the tree and the branches of the tree and came down. As you know, it's still there and I'm on the third year of restoring it. I had a contract for three years to restore it.

Teiser: Are you going to make it?
Cravath: Oh, yes. You know, a deadline is all I need, and the greater part of the work is done. But I couldn't have done it if I hadn't brought these chips up. When I moved from the stone-yard, I brought these great big stone chips* thinking I would use them in the garden here. And, you know, it's a terrible thing; I never can throw things away and I even found among my things a little jar labeled "Pure Starr King Dust" and--now, really!--that was very useful. I've had to make a lot more Starr King dust. But I'm coming out with just enough pieces of the stone. I've had to put arms on and noses and hands and heels and toes.

Harroun: If you hadn't saved that, you couldn't have--

Cravath: I couldn't have done it because I went out to this stoneyard in South San Francisco hoping to get a big piece for the whole dove but they had no more. Now there's one more big piece to put on for the dove's head. I have the body and Starr King's hands and I've been carving it. I have more carving to do, but just one more thing to glue on and then carve it.

Teiser: Do I remember your saying that this is something that would not have been technically possible in earlier periods because there weren't the adhesives then?

Cravath: Well, there was German cement, but not as good as this epoxy, which has made it technically possible for me to do it--because I'm not a very good technician. But the epoxy is so hard that the part that I mix--I mix a lot of the stone dust with it and the stone chips, you see, and then carve it. It relates to the stone. It shows a little bit, but it has some of the texture of the stone. You can make a thick paste with epoxy and stone dust and stone chips and it's harder than the stone itself, but it carves nicely. It's very reliable to carve.

So that's what's made it possible for me. I mean, I didn't know about epoxy years ago, but this is especially good epoxy that I get from Vermont Marble Company. I send to Vermont for it since they closed their shop here. I got some locally--one of my students was repairing something--and it wasn't as good as this Marfix. We shouldn't do a commercial for Marfix, but--[laughter].

*From the stone for the Starr King statue.
Teiser: How had the damage been done, do you think, this time and why? Is there any theory?

Cravath: No, it happened on a weekend. You see, the reason that the statue survived for many years was it was surrounded by the public housing project, the Wisconsin war housing, those temporary buildings, and there were people around it all the time. Well, this war housing was all torn down and it is now the most isolated place in the city, I think, on weekends, just nobody around. And this happened on a weekend, a Saturday or a Sunday, and it was not a child's job. I mean, somebody was very efficient. I can see where they put the chisel, and they got the dove and the hand all off in one great big piece, you could see. I mean, it was a clean break.

Well, you see, unfortunately, I was not informed by the officials at the school and this made me quite angry that when it happened I just found it by myself this way. Well, I rushed right over the following Monday morning and went into the office. I was very upset and the principal said, "We had some vandalism here two or three weeks ago." I said, "Two or three weeks! I wasn't informed!" She passed the buck and said the art specialist was supposed to tell me. Well, that's neither here nor there.

The maintenance man cleaned up afterwards and there were just chips. But somebody, I think, has the dove. I don't know who. I think it came off in one big piece because the break was a clean break.

Teiser: Did it look as if it were work by somebody who knew how to handle sculpture tools?

Cravath: Yes. Well, who knew where to put a chisel to break a big piece off. I don't know. It wasn't children's work. But it was quite vicious because it attacked everything where there were protuberances. Of course, they could have done more, but whether somebody came and they ran away--what stopped them I don't know.

But I had a three-year contract to restore it because I didn't want to be pinned down. I think it's going to stand here in the stoneyard the rest of my life because they haven't decided what to do with that area up there, what kind of housing, you see. It's still vacant. It belongs to the city and they can't make up their minds what's going to happen. Presumably,
Cravath: it still belongs to the school board.*

Teiser: There are a number of figures that are out in public housing projects in the middle of courtyards.

Cravath: Yes. There have been some of Bufano's animals, I believe.

Teiser: They're, I suppose, under people's eyes so there is not much--

Cravath: Yes, not so much. I hear that there's been some vandalism on Benny's work near the Alcoa building.

Teiser: Well, that's isolated too except in the daytime. Even in the daytime the area's a little sequestered.

Cravath: Well, it's too bad, isn't it?

Teiser: Yes. Do you think--I'm just wondering if the temper of the times is somewhat changed, if this occurred in a period when vandalism had come up tremendously.

Cravath: Oh, I think so. I think so.

Teiser: And maybe it's going down a little bit?

Cravath: I hope so. It happened at about the same time that the Pieta was attacked, the Pieta in St. Peter's.

Teiser: Oh, yes. That's a little mystical to think there was a relationship!

Cravath: [Laughter] Yes!

Teiser: That was, of course, by someone who was apparently mad.

Cravath: Yes, yes. Well, this must have been by somebody who was mad or sick or something.

*See also pp. 275-276.
THE IBM COMMISSION

Cravath: The next thing is the IBM.

Teiser: It marks rather a change in style for you, does it not? Had you done anything of that sort before it?

Cravath: No, no. And I haven't done a great deal of that style since, although St. Francis is, yes.

Well, now, just as you like. Do you think this is a good place to stop? It's up to you. I mean, I can continue.

Harroun: That's a long story.

Cravath: The IBM? Is it?

Teiser: Isn't it?

Cravath: [Pauses to think.] Well, I don't think it's such a long story.

Teiser: Well, tell it.

Cravath: Well, John Bolles was the architect of the IBM plant* and he's always been one of the architects who's most friendly to artists, and he's had his own gallery. He has his own collection, which he's given to the Oakland Museum. A number of artists were given commissions. I really should have the names of all of them, but I haven't, but I can tell you quite a few of them. I mean, I can tell you the names of the sculptors, I think, who were given commissions.

Bob Howard did the large fountain, the main piece of sculpture, the central piece. Otherwise, there was a certain sum of money that each artists was paid. I think it was something like $800; it wasn't very much. They were given a space or a design, you know, and asked to do something for that.

So there are many small fountains or sculptures. Mary Erckenbrack had one. Gurdon Woods had one, and mine, besides Bob Howard's. Then a number of artists did the murals. This material you can get from John Bolles.

*Just south of San Jose, California.
Teiser:  It was another thing almost like the Fair, wasn't it?
Cravath:  Yes, yes. A lot of artists.

So there was this space to use in the pavement in front of the Education Building, so I came up with this idea of these cast concrete and colored glass things.

Teiser:  Would you describe the pieces at the IBM plant?
Cravath:  Everything there is abstract. Well, mine are poured concrete with stained glass windows and it's a group. There are three sculptures, shall we say, because I don't know what you'd call them. We named it finally "Timeless Family," but I was really more or less thinking of mountains when I designed it.

The tallest one is nine feet high and then there's one placed in relation to that that's seven feet and then there's the small one that's six feet high. Two of them are facing one way and another one another way, so the sun at different times of day casts colorful pools of color on the cement around them.

Teiser:  Are you satisfied with the way they are in place?
Cravath:  Yes, I am. I'm quite pleased about it.

Teiser:  Have they caused much comment?
Cravath:  Well, they had all sorts of amusing names for them down there. The three men--I forget the names of the three high-up men in IBM, but the people called them by their names: "So-and-So and So-and-So and So-and-So." And I had a letter from Paris from Channing Peake, who had taken my studio on Montgomery Street after I moved, and at some function there he'd heard somebody speaking who saw the IBM plant being visited by some Russians and saw the pictures of my work and of Kruschev. The Russians weren't very fond of it apparently, but he was very pleased that it really had gotten to Paris, that it was there.

Harroun:  I think it's very effective.
Cravath:  Well, the Russians liked at that time very representational art, you see, so that they weren't so fond of it. But there
Cravath: wasn't anything in the way of art down there that would please them, I don't believe, then because it was all abstract.

I just designed from small models, you see, and then I had to make the drawings for the forms. So it didn't take such a great deal of time to do it, and the forms were made for me. This is where Spero Anargyros came in. He was my great helper. He made the forms and they were so designed that corrugated iron took care of one surface and it gave a color to it, and it was the form. The rest of it was plywood, and then certain areas I tooled to get a variety, and certain areas I left just the poured concrete. So there's the poured concrete and the nine-point tooled areas and the corrugated iron texture which was fabricated in the stoneyard. You know, the forms were made in the stoneyard and we had Ready-Mix deliver the concrete from the truck right into the forms.

Harroun: When was this?

Cravath: In 1957. So, it was very practical. I mean, the casting was a one-morning job. They had their big churning thing and Spero was there and the concrete was poured right into the forms there in place.

Then, when that was set, they were put upright and the forms were pulled off and I tooled the areas that were to be tooled. Then I had the templates for the stained glass--that was from John Lucas--to fit. And that stained glass was put in place in San Jose after they were installed down there. It was just a glazing job, putting them in with the glazing compound.

Teiser: Well, Ruth, had anyone ever done anything like this before?

Cravath: No, I guess not exactly like it, but concrete and stained glass have been used. Well, the new style stained glass windows, of course, are using concrete instead of lead, like the ones at St. Peter's Church in Redwood City that Gabriel Loire did. Colored glass and concrete can be worked together, you see, architecturally.

Teiser: Was that what started you thinking this way?
Cravath: I'm not sure but what somebody suggested this to me. The architect—I can't remember; somebody suggested that it was a possibility that I could do something in the pavement or something with concrete and stained glass. But it should be abstract, and that was a natural for making something that was abstract.

Teiser: Let me turn this tape over.

Harroun: From your description of the IBM statues, it sounds to me as if it was a much simpler project to execute than, for instance, the Starr King.

Cravath: Indeed it was much, much simpler. The Starr King, as you know, just the execution after the designing took me a year. It was fun designing the IBM just in these little forms. I have the original designs in my office and then I had to make the full-scale drawings. But the actual execution, as I told you, was not my actual labor. The forms were made, I didn't do it, but I had designed them and I was around, and the concrete was poured into the forms. I mean, Spero and the cement men shoveled it in [laughter] so that it was much simpler, and it had to be because of the money they had to spend.* You had to figure out something that you could afford to do for that amount of money.

Teiser: You said $800. That was just for submitting a plan?

Cravath: No, that was the whole thing. That was the artist's. But it was very cheap, you see; I mean, the time you put into it. That's what we got, $800.

Teiser: Did they pay for your materials?

Cravath: No. I think you paid for the whole thing, as I remember it.

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*See also pp. 266-267.
COMPETITIONS, SUBMISSIONS AND COMMISSIONS

Teiser: This brings up something that came up recently with a group of artists in the Bay Area who had gathered to form a little guild or union. They said they refused to enter competitions because that means, in effect, submitting ideas and doing work for nothing, and if people wanted to have competitions in which they would pay a fee for submissions of ideas that would adequately cover the preliminary work, okay; but otherwise no. Has this cropped up in your work?

Cravath: It has in my feeling. I mean, I feel that very strongly, that it's not fair for artists, because the idea on the preliminary drawings is sometimes the most difficult part of it and I don't think that this should happen. I believe in commissions. I mean, I think it's fine if they want to commission several people to submit designs and pay, as they do in some big competitions, but for nothing I don't think it's fair.

Teiser: Have you often submitted a design without any payment because the possible rewards seemed great enough that--?

Cravath: The only time in my career that I can remember is something subsequently for St. Peter's Church in Redwood City and I was urged by my dear sister-in-law to do it; she thought it was worthwhile. There was to be a sign for the church at the corner, and I had the idea of the sign and a bench and some sculpture around it. I made a little plan and I really made a design. Dorothy advised me to do it and nothing ever came of it.

I was driving by there several years later and there was a sign, and it was sort of my idea. It was in the corner. There was no sculpture on it. And I was rather annoyed about that. So that really cured me.

Without an understanding that there would be something paid for the sketch—the only other job that I haven't really gone further with and that hasn't worked out, was the library in Santa Rosa. The architect had died during the process—I mean, the original architect—and the fellow who took over the work and I didn't quite get along. I went up there many times and it didn't work out, and it was fine, but they paid me a fee for the sketch—I mean, the library did—so it was perfectly fair. My design wasn't accepted, but I have no gripe about that. I believe that Mark Adams has designed a tapestry for the area.
Cravath: But this St. Peter's business I was pretty put out about really.

So I wouldn't undertake to do any job now without the understanding that preliminary sketches would be paid for.

Teiser: Did you say that you had done one other thing in that same style as the IBM group?

Cravath: Well, I've done in that same style the thing that's down here in the garden and then St. Francis at Candlestick Park, which is more representational. I'd call that abstract representational, but it's the same style; it was made the same way.

Teiser: We'll get to that later.

Cravath: Yes, that comes into the '70s.

Teiser: How do you describe the "thing" in the garden?

Cravath: [Laughter] Well, I just named it "October, 1960" because that's when I did it. It's in two pieces. It's concrete, which was made here, and Vas Arnautoff helped me make the forms for that, and it was tooled. It's a smaller thing in two pieces and it's at the end of the walk when you enter my stoneyard.

Teiser: It's very much the same sort as the IBM figures.

Cravath: It's the same style and I've exhibited that a number of times. These things are simpler to do and they're sort of fun, but I haven't done a great many of them, just really the IBM group and that and the St. Francis. But I don't think I'd have the energy to carve a twenty-seven foot high statue, so it was fine that Williams and Burroughs could make it for me. Well, that comes next time.
SCULPTURE AS THERAPY
(Interview 7, March 6, 1975)

Teiser: Catherine, before you came in we were talking about sculpture as therapy. Ruth said that she has had students in her classes who were sent to her by psychiatrists.

Cravath: Well, some of them. Not necessarily. I mean, with children particularly. I used to have a lot of problem children and I think that that was suggested to them.

Teiser: I said, "I suppose it's therapeutic to have people use their hands," and you objected to that, Ruth. What did you say?

Cravath: I bristled. I always bristle.

Teiser: Say what you said.

Cravath: Well, I said it's the mind, the attention that it takes. It's not the hands. I mean, knitting would take care of that better than sculpture because in sculpture you have to stop and think more. The hands are involved, but not any more than the hands are involved in, as I say, knitting or a lot of other things, like sewing.

Teiser: And you added something about manual dexterity.

Cravath: Yes. I quoted the fact that Cezanne was slightly clumsy, or thought he was. But it was his great ideas and his vision, what he saw, that came through. I mean, many artists who have great manual dexterity haven't too much to say. It's wonderful to have it. It goes together, but manual dexterity isn't necessarily the only thing.
LAST MONTHS AT THE STACKPOLE STUDIO

Teiser: Shall we start with your last work on Montgomery Street, the Archangel Gabriel?

Cravath: Yes, that was the last one, and it's at the Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland. I have a beautiful set of photographs of that, slides, called "The Last Act of the Stoneyard," that Channing Peake took. He had the painting studio upstairs, you see, at the time.

Dorothy always liked the picture she called "The Bishops," with these about four or five great, big, husky men. They were moving the Archangel Gabriel and they all had their hands on his head. [Laughter] I'll show you the series because it's rather fun.

That was the last thing I did there and it was quite a thing. You weren't there to photograph that departure.

Teiser: No.

Cravath: The Angel Gabriel was "The Last Act of the Stoneyard," as Channing Peake said. That's before it got to be the Villa Taverna.

Teiser: How did you happen to do the Angel Gabriel?

Cravath: Well, Aaron Green was the architect for several of the Chapels of the Chimes. Doris Day was his decorator. So I knew him and I knew Doris Day and they wanted a statue for the Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland.

The figure is located right under a skylight, and I wish I had been there when it was installed because they opened up the skylight and the angel came right down from heaven. [Laughter] That would have made a wonderful movie, I think, because they delivered it through the skylight from above.

Teiser: Did they choose which angel?

Cravath: Yes, they chose which angel and I had to be very careful not to be--what's the word I want--denominational. [Laughter] You had to suit the Catholics and the Jews; I think he's in the Old Testament, isn't he, too? And the Protestants and everybody, yes.
Cravath: So the symbol was a palm leaf, I know. We were very careful not to offend anybody who might come to their final resting place near him. [Chuckle]

Of course, it has quite a setting with greenery around it and a skylight and so forth. I told you about Tee Corinne. She's been going all around photographing my works in place and I was a little disappointed in the slides she got of that.

Teiser: What's the medium?

Cravath: It's Roman travertine and mosaic. It's mosaic on the wings and, well, I'll show you pictures of it.

Teiser: Well, I'll let you describe it in words.

Cravath: Oh, yes. That's right, you can't--

Teiser: Mosaic on the wings?

Cravath: Yes. It's from blue to green, Byzantine glass, mosaic tesserae. And then around the head is a gold mosaic and around the neck of his garment is gold mosaic.

Teiser: How tall a figure is it?

Cravath: It's about five feet.

Teiser: When did you first work with mosaic?

Cravath: I haven't done a great deal of work with mosaic. My sister-in-law, Dorothy Cravath and I gave a class. She was the instructor and I was the conductor, you might say, of a mosaic class in my stoneyard on Montgomery Street. She did the teaching and I helped her; I mean, I had to get the materials. Weren't you in that class, Catherine?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: I thought you were, yes. It was a pebble mosaic class.

Well, so, I mean, I knew how she did it. I got involved that way, but I didn't, myself, do any pebble mosaics until I was artist in residence in this resort up in Montana--Troy, Montana--and I did a Montana "Mountain Goat," which is still up
Cravath: there. I must get that, collect it, some time. I collected pebbles on the Kootenay River and various places. Well, I had a class there and they all made pebble mosaics. Then I had the pebble mosaic project at Good Samaritan Church. That comes in the ’60s.

Teiser: Did the mosaic tie in at all with the work you did on the IBM figures?

Cravath: That was stained glass and just big areas.

Teiser: Is there any similarity?

Cravath: No, no. There's no similarity. I know why you ask the question, because contemporary glass windows are set in concrete now-- Gabriel Loire, and Dorothy has done a few, you know, designed some--instead of using leading, they use concrete, and you related the concrete to the stained glass. But the IBM and also the St. Francis and the one down here, the three projects I've done in that material, are just sheets of glass in a certain area, you see. It's not a mosaic.

Teiser: I see. I thought before you left the subject of the Montgomery Street studio that you might just describe that building and who lived in it.

Cravath: Yes. I left Montgomery Street with some regret, you know. It was a very historic building. Ralph Stackpole and Dr. Eloesser owned the building jointly for years. Stackpole had the studio over the stoneyard, Studio #3. There were three studios. The first one was occupied by Edith Hamlin and her first husband, Albert Barrows. He was a painter and they lived there. But when I moved in, Frank Merwin, the architect, had that, or soon afterwards; originally William Gerstle occupied the middle studio for years, and Stackpole had the back studio, and different people have had the front studio.

The stoneyard was right down the stairs, as you remember, from Studio #3.

Teiser: Your studio was on the second floor?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: A two-story building?
Cravath: A two-story building, yes, and the first story was a Chinese laundry when I moved in. Before that, the Modern Gallery had had that section. I think we went through the Modern Gallery before.

Teiser: Yes, we did.

Cravath: And it opened into Stackpole's stoneyard because when the Oldfield wedding occurred there we danced in the Modern Gallery.* But before I had moved there in 1949, it was occupied and used as a Chinese laundry. The Wong family had three little girls. They became great friends of mine. Their parents didn't speak English, but they did, and they said I was a good artist because I did a figure of Christ, I remember. [Chuckle]

Teiser: The stoneyard, as I remember, ran from the rear of the building to Hotaling Place.

Cravath: Right, right. And do you remember the original gate, the original wooden gate? It was a sort of a big garage gate. And then there was a little peephole that you opened, a little tiny peephole that Stackpole would open to see who was out there. Then if it was someone that was to be admitted, there was a slightly larger gate that was opened and one had to step over it to come in. So there were the three gates.

When that finally wore out and I had to have a new gate, Timothy Wulf was—what happened was Stackpole and Timothy Wulf owned the building together and then Stackpole sold his share to Dr. Eloesser. Timothy was my landlord at the time, so he put up a new garage door and he was a little bored with me because I insisted on the smaller gate to come through, with a lock, you see, so we didn't have to open up the big gate every time anybody went in and out.

Well, that was rather an historic place because Stackpole had had it over—well, I remember that he had it in the '20s. I don't know how early he was there and I believe the sculptor Arthur Putnam had used it before. I'm not absolutely certain about that. And it was the old waterfront,** as you remember,

*pp. 47-50.

**The original waterfront of San Francisco came up to the Montgomery Street line in some places.
Cravath: and there was this great—one of the supports with the block and tackle was the mast from the ship that had been moored there, and these little doors in my cupboard out here came from the same ship. There was the little shop. Phil Pratt, a jeweler, had the corner studio, the studio in the rear. And there was a little fireplace in there. It was a two-story. It looked very like a French house, upright, straight up, one room right on top of the other. What was I starting to say about that? What was I telling about?

Teiser: Your cupboard doors.

Cravath: Right, the cupboard doors. The cupboard doors were all installed in that little building, upstairs, and when I had to move when they were remodelling it to make it the Villa Taverna, Dr. Eloesser told me to take anything I wanted, so I very happily brought those doors up here. And this bannister was from that building—not from that little place, but the front building.

Teiser: The bannister on your staircase now?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: Why did you have to leave?

Cravath: Well, I had to leave because the building was sold to Carl James. By that time the property was very valuable, you see, and no artists could afford to pay the rent. Dr. Eloesser, with tears in his eyes, told me I would have to move. Then, temporarily, Channing Peake, the artist, came in and I think he paid quite a high rent and I kept the stoneyard. I was finishing the Angel Gabriel and I lived in the little shop at the corner. I evicted my tenant, Phil Pratt, from there so I had a place until I moved up here on the hill that summer. You remember? I camped down there. I used to cook over that little fireplace.

Oh, it was really fun. I remember Channing Peake said I was just like a little girl. I was so excited about camping there. It was really fun. So I had all my time to work. My father bought this place at the end of July 1958, and I didn't move up here till the first of November because of the Angel Gabriel. I knew if I got involved here I'd never finish the job, so I sort of pretended this was my place in the country.
THE HOUSE AND STUDIO ON POTRERO HILL

Cravath: I came up here weekends only and worked on it until the final move the first of November, and it took G.W. Thomas movers—riggers, you know—from eight o'clock in the morning till five in the afternoon to move me.

I brought a lot of stone from the place, and the compressor. This was the second move. The furniture had been moved up here the first of August, but the big move was the equipment from the stoneyard, and pieces of stone. I had to leave a lot of it, but the whole stone wall here was made of pieces of stone that came from there, and I planned it. They'd take it off of the truck and bring it in with a forklift and I told them where to put it. We just built that wall just like that, you see.

Teiser: As they brought it in?

Cravath: As they brought it in. There were two levels here, you see; there was the parking area. Then somebody had prepared the place, so we were able to place them that way, so it was quite a feat—no cement or anything, you know—not quite as good a job as the Inca walls, I will admit [laughter], but it was done in one day.

Harroun: You must have done a lot of planning ahead.

Cravath: Well, as much as I could. I had measured the pieces of stone down there, so I knew that they would fill in the area, you see.

Teiser: How many pieces does it involve, about?

Cravath: I don't know. I'll have to go down and count them. You bring up a new idea.

Teiser: A hundred?

Cravath: No, I don't think that many.

Teiser: If you ever need to use any--

Cravath: We've already taken several out. I realized that it was a place to store them, you know, stone that was good to carve. So the plan was that when I wanted a piece to carve, we'd take it out and I'd put a wooden frame in front, you see, a piece
Cravath: on each side, and fill the area with cement, like filling a
tooth, so the cement would take care of the blocks. There
are a couple of cement blocks down there now. We've taken two
pieces out recently. You saw them in the stoneyard. I've only
removed three or four in the fifteen years I've been here. That
was the idea.

Teiser: Describe this house. What was it like when you got it, when
your father bought it?

Cravath: Well, this was a house that was built right after the earth-
quake in 1906, brown shingled. Some of my friends say it looks
like a Berkeley house, but it has a unique quality, I think,
set back from the street.

The young man from whom my father bought it was the grand-
son of the police sergeant who had built it, and he did a lot
of the work himself. The upstairs where I live* was the upstairs
in this house, a two-story house originally. But the young man
had started to make an apartment up here and they'd put in
that illegal stairway that you come up. [Chuckle] They used
to come up from the kitchen downstairs. That's why it was an
attic stairs, you see. And under my little redwood stoop are
cement steps that came up. I remember having to step on a box
to get into the house. We had a little box out there until
Artists Equity Association gave me a work party. Did I tell you
about the work party?

Teiser: Yes, you did.** And built you the steps.

Cravath: And built the little porch, the little stoop out there, a
platform, and did many other things. It was a one-Sunday work
party and they did a great deal.

The kitchen here was a sun porch, you see. This room was
very much as it is, and there was a little tiny bedroom. As you
know, about seven or eight years ago I did a little remodeling--
raised the roof and made the guest room and then opened this
entrance up here.

Teiser: And downstairs there's an apartment or flat.

*Where the interview was held, in the living room.

**pp. 157-158
Cravath: Yes. Downstairs was the downstairs in the house, and it was convenient to do this because there was a bathroom downstairs and upstairs and, of course, the kitchen is downstairs and there are two bedrooms and there is a fireplace there.

Teiser: And there's a basement where you showed us you have room for storage.

Cravath: There's a terrific basement, yes.

Teiser: And was the studio building there?

Cravath: The studio was a little sort of a garden shed all open to the south, you see. It was just cement. It didn't have the skylight or anything. It was four feet narrower than it is now. So I wanted to raise the roof, oh, a foot or so, you know, and have a higher ceiling, but my tenant downstairs, Arden Arnautoff, didn't want to have her view spoiled. I said she could stand up, but she didn't want to stand up. She wanted to see the waterfront without standing up, so I was only permitted to raise it about four inches instead of as much as I wanted to. Then we moved the roof forward and filled in the four feet with the skylight, that plastic skylight. My father, at the age of eighty-seven, conducted this construction and did most of the work and he just had a wonderful time. We added the four feet, you see. We moved the roof over, and we had a construction company put down four feet more of concrete.

Teiser: Now you have, in effect, two rooms there?

Cravath: No. It's just enlarging the space, making one room, and closing the front. Well, the little office you mean?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: That was an alcove, yes. That was there before. We took the two doors that were there, and we put those doors in between the office and the studio so I can close the office off if it's very cold.

Teiser: And it lets directly onto your stoneyard.

Cravath: Right.

Teiser: How big is your stoneyard?
Cravath: Well, let's see. [Pauses] I wish I could give you the dimensions. The house is on a fifty foot lot and about twelve feet of it is taken for the studio, so if you subtract twelve feet from fifty feet, it's thirty-eight feet wide and not quite that deep. [Laughter]

Teiser: Is the weather here better than it was on Montgomery Street? Can you work outdoors more here than there?

Cravath: Well, it was quite sheltered on Montgomery Street. It was a big building, so it was sheltered from the wind. I often didn't realize how cold it was outside the stoneyard. I worked out there every month in the year. There were about--how many months of the year that the sun didn't get down into the stoneyard? I think about seven months of the year it didn't get all the way down. I used to watch it come down the wall, you see, and then when it got down into the stoneyard it was very, very warm and very nice. But it was sheltered and it was a beautiful light to work in. It was a lovely place.

This place is sheltered by the house, fortunately. I realize when I go into the parking area--you know, the twenty-five feet to the north--it's very windy and cold there often, and it's comfortable in the stoneyard. So it's a good place to work.

Teiser: And you get a good deal of sunlight.

Cravath: Yes, yes. It's very good.

Harroun: Ruth, how did you find this house? Did you yourself, or--?

Cravath: No. Didn't I tell you about the other studio that's now Spero Anargyros'? It's rather an interesting story.

Dorothy Carroll--you remember Dorothy Carroll, the friend who had been a real estate agent and who was a student of mine and very interested in art. She had a couple of houses she and Janine Bailey were remodeling on the hill, so they were up here quite a bit. She saw a place down on Arkansas Street she thought I might be interested in. She said she'd keep her eyes open and she found that it was a Skyline Realty Company. So I called them and this woman came and took me up and showed me that place, but it wasn't just what I wanted. We looked at several places and we didn't see what I wanted.
Cravath: Then one day I heard of a place on Clay Street. It's around the corner from the Clay Theatre, across the street from Elizabeth Osterman, a doctor. David Tollerton and his wife were in her apartment for the summer, and they said this place was for sale. And it would have been just right because you can drive right in from the street to a stoneyard. It was a Victorian house, a two-story house, so there would be rental property, which interested my father, you see.

So I called the real estate woman. I was teaching at the art school in the morning and she said she'd come and get me at one o'clock and she'd take me out to see it. But she went out in the meantime in the morning and she called me at one o'clock, very discouraged. She said, "The place was exactly what you want, but it was sold this morning." So we felt depressed, but she said, "I went to a multiple-listing breakfast." That's a wonderful institution; it brought me here. She went to a multiple-listing breakfast that morning and there was a place on Wisconsin Street that had just come up. Would I be interested in seeing that? And I said, "Oh, well, okay." You know, I thought I'd better go.

So we drove up here. We drove up and down and she had 863 Wisconsin Street and there was no 863. This is 893. We drive up and down and up and down and I said, "Sue, you couldn't have turned that '6' upside down, could you?", because this was 893.

So, we got here. She didn't have a key to the house, but we walked around, and here was the stoneyard, and I loved the place. And there was the little shed, the beginning of the studio, that wasn't finished, you see. Well, I just thought it was perfect.

Teiser: Was the stoneyard a garden?

Cravath: Yes, it was a garden. There were some roses that were kind of defunct, and the tree which is there. The first thing we had to do was to cut a round of limbs off of the monkey tree, the umbrella tree, to raise the roof of the stoneyard. I've raised it three times since I've been here--the first time so we could use it at all, and then when I did the statue of St. Dominick, which we'll come to pretty soon. It was the first project of this stoneyard. We had to take another round off to get him in, and then finally when Starr King moved in. That really improved the place because it made so much more light. It was always with
Cravath: regret that I parted with these branches, but it always improved the situation.

So, anyway, we looked at it. We didn't get in. We walked around, but I didn't have to get inside, you see. So we brought my father over the next day and she had the key and we looked at the place, upstairs and downstairs. He went right down to her office where he made an offer just like that. His offer was accepted and here I am.

Teiser: I'll bet your father started inspecting the basement first, though, and the uprights.

Cravath: Oh, yes indeed. Oh, he changed all the lighting; I mean, the wiring. Of course, he had to put 220 wiring in for my compressor in the basement, so he took care of all of that.

Well, the place on Clay Street that we were going to see that morning was sold. Subsequently it was sold again to none other than my colleague, Spero Anargyros, the sculptor, and he built the perfect studio, which I could never have built there. So this was so much better for me and that was just ideal for him, and he remodeled the house inside. It's a beautiful place. But he built a magnificent, great, big indoor studio with a high ceiling and so forth. It was quite interesting, I thought, that he bought it from the people that bought it out from under me, as it were. But this is so much better for me, so I'm grateful.

LIVING ON POTRERO HILL

Teiser: You've enjoyed living on Potrero Hill?

Cravath: Yes, I have.

Teiser: What's it like? I know you've had a good deal of community activity.

Cravath: Yes, I've never lived in a small town in my whole life. I was born and raised in Chicago and I lived in San Francisco. Potrero Hill is more like a town. I mean, there's a community feeling which I've really enjoyed. It's quite nice.
Cravath: Every year for seventeen or eighteen years during Library Week, there's been an exhibition in our library up here of the work of artists on the hill. I remember one year there was a little article about this in Life magazine. We had a very enterprising librarian, Mrs. Thomas, at the time. But the subsequent librarians have carried out the tradition. I think I told you about the Starr King. The artists on the hill thought it would be nice to have an unveiling for my statue at the time of Library Week. Remember, I did tell you about that?

Teiser: Yes. You did tell us about that.* It's quite a mix, isn't it, the people who live here?

Cravath: Yes, it is. The Russians. When I moved up here there was more Russian than English spoken on the 53 bus, the local bus, and you still see the ladies with their lace kerchiefs on their heads and their long, white aprons, and the old gentlemen. There's a few of them left, the Molokans, who settled here. They're very good citizens. And there are a lot of Russian names up here now and there are quite a few Italians. My next-door neighbor was a Scotch shipbuilder, Gibson, when I moved here. He made several trips back to Scotland to visit his relatives and on the second or third trip he died, but he was quite old and an interesting character.

Teiser: Then some of the people you knew had come earlier, hadn't they?

Cravath: Yes. Well, that's how I really happened to come up. Dorothy Carroll had this place, and Janine Bailey. And Gurdon Woods, who was the director of the art school at the time, was living on Wisconsin Street several blocks down the hill, and Suzie Coons next door to him. First Gurdon came and then Suzie moved up here. We all helped Suzie paint her interior and get her house ready. And Henri Marie-Rose is on Arkansas Street.

Harroun: I wanted to ask you about him.

Cravath: Yes. He's over on Arkansas Street and he came before I did.

Harroun: He is a painter, is he?

Cravath: He is a sculptor, but he paints too, yes. He does metal sculpture.

*See p. 189.
Cravath: And Charles Farr. Interestingly enough, so many of these artists—practically all the ones I've mentioned—came from the North Beach area. Gurdon Woods was on Caddel Place, which is off of Union Street, you know. Henri Marie-Rose was in North Beach. Charles Farr was down there; he owns a house and has a wonderful studio where I work from the model every Monday morning now, you know. Blanche Phillips Howard and Langley Howard live across the street. But they moved here about three years ago; they're newcomers on the hill.

There's a great many artists up here now, yes. And, as I say, it's so interesting that so many of them came from Telegraph Hill to Potrero Hill.

Teiser: You know along Grant Avenue there used to be restaurants where people would go and eat and talk. There doesn't seem to be any such place here on this hill.

Cravath: That's the sad thing about this hill. We lack restaurants, really. A few years ago one was opened at 18th and Connecticut, the Hollander, which was very good, and we were all delighted. I tried to go down there at least once a week to help keep it going, to encourage them, and all of us enjoyed it quite a bit. But they sold to some other people and I only went there once after that. It was Chinese, but it wasn't a real Chinese restaurant, and then subsequently it got into other hands and rapidly deteriorated.

Teiser: One place where you meet is at the library.

Cravath: Well, the Neighborhood House too, which is closer to me, and that's where the Julian Theatre is, over here in Southern Heights. I belong to the Potrero Hill Residents and Homeowners Council and it was a very active organization up until about two years ago. I guess it's sort of dwindled a bit, but it may come to life again. We had Elaine Sundahl, who was very articulate and very active, and she moved away. Her husband retired, and that was a great loss to our organization.

Teiser: What sort of thing did it do?

Cravath: Oh, we worked hard about any community project, such as planting trees. We worked out that mini-park across from the Neighborhood House. Then there's a twisty "Y" street on Vermont; we landscaped that, and we worried about what would happen to the Wisconsin
Cravath: Housing Project and all sorts of community things for beautification—the tree-planting and the waterfront. We had a walk along the waterfront, you know, looking for sections for a park down there and for boating and so forth.

We even went to Sacramento about something a few years ago. What was that? Oh, to protest some kind of bridge connecting to 20th Street. Yes, a whole busload of us went up to Sacramento and then the governor came down and looked at the hill.

Teiser: Reagan?

Cravath: Oh, no, no. This was years ago before we had Reagan.

Teiser: Well, in recent years there's been a crime problem here. I don't know if it's worse in other neighborhoods or not. Did that group do anything about that?

Cravath: We met with the police community relations now and then. They would come and we'd talk about it. I don't know just what we were able to do. We supported anything that seemed to be helpful.

Teiser: You had a housing project over here, low income, mainly black?

Cravath: Right, yes. There still is the housing project. They tore down the war housing part of it, you know, and that's why the Starr King was vandalized.

Teiser: Has that changed the character of the hill, taking away that much housing?

Cravath: I don't believe it has. I don't think it has.

Teiser: There is a fringe of unemployed black people about, is there?

Cravath: Oh, yes. There's a great group that you see down here at Wisconsin and 23rd Streets, you know.

Teiser: They live on the eastern side?

Cravath: Well, I think they come from other parts of town too, but many of them live in the project, which is right down here. This was one of the first housing projects built on Potrero Hill.
Cravath: I remember coming up here to see it. It was a great thing. When was it? In the '40s? If you notice, it has real tile roofs. It's about the only place in the city that has real tile roofs and it was quite a thing when it was new. Those buildings are still there and in quite good shape, I think, and it has beautiful landscaping; I mean, the trees planted. You know, it's a very open and very attractive area as far as the city is concerned, I think.

Well, yes, there has been a lot of crime here, but there is on Nob Hill too, but it doesn't get the publicity. It used to be that whenever something came up with the Potrero police station, my friends would all think it was right up here. Well, the Potrero police station takes care of Bayview and everything. It's off the hill. It doesn't necessarily mean it happens on Potrero Hill, but it would get more publicity than crimes on Nob Hill. But I think there's probably just as much over there as here.

Harroun: Dorothy said that she would worry about you, and you would worry about her Berkeley district. [Laughter]

Cravath: Yes, I think her district was fully as dangerous--and more grim things seemed to happen right close to her than here, yes.

Teiser: You have the yearly exhibit--

Cravath: --at the library. All the artists on the hill exhibit in that and that's always during Library Week. We have a party at the opening and some of the Russians dance and Henri Marie-Rose plays his drum and sings his Martinique songs and it's always a nice party.

Well, another thing, we've had several studio tours, and I've been on studio tours since the Montgomery Street days. My studio there was on tours. I never refuse when I'm asked to have my studio on a tour because I get the studio cleaned up. [Chuckle] You know, I'm the sort of person that has to have something, an event, and the studio would always get all polished up.* So I always agree to be on a studio tour because it feels so good afterwards. [Laughter]

*This is an exaggeration. Ruth Cravath's studio is more orderly and cleaner than most. R.T.
Teiser: I noticed in your scrapbook there were a number of them.

Cravath: Yes, yes. One of them was for ORT* up here, and one or two of them were for the benefit of the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association, and the last studio tour I was involved in--I think there must have been four of them because I think there were two for the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association and one for ORT, which was on Sunday and very successful because everybody came and it was a nice Sunday afternoon. The last one was for the benefit of our Potrero Hill Residents and Homeowners and that was a Sunday afternoon and that was very successful as far as attendance is concerned.

Teiser: There are a certain number of writers who live up here. Do the artists and the writers speak?

Cravath: [Chuckle] Yes, if they know each other. [Lawrence] Ferlinghetti did live up here on Wisconsin Street, just down the street.

Teiser: Does he now?

Cravath: I don't think so. I don't know where he's living now, but he had a very attractive Victorian house, the red house down the street. It's a darling house.

Teiser: The other thing in addition to the lack of places to meet is the lack of stores. Does this not bother people?

Cravath: That's right. And there's no bank up here on the hill. There are a few grocery stores, but my favorite one, which was near the project here, the Fourway, closed up a few years ago. They had awful problems there. Yes, there's not very much of a shopping area.

Teiser: And you don't have a car.

Cravath: I don't have a car. But I have the 53 bus, which goes right from here to the Safeway down at Potrero and 16th, and I have lots of friends with cars. That's the best of it. But the bus does stop practically in front of my house, yes, and now since I moved up here the 19 Polk bus comes up here; not every one, but every third or every other one comes up the hill. So that helps too.

*Women's American Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training
TRAVELS IN EUROPE; FIRST TRIP

Teiser: [Looking at outline.] Should we take "Travels" next or "Social Concerns?"

Cravath: Let's take "Travels" next. You see, I filled in all those dates for you on your copy.

Teiser: In addition to Europe 1959 and 1974 you have added 1954 and 1969 for Mexico, and December 1972 to January 1973 for South America. Do you want to talk about the circumstances of how you happened to make the trip to Europe, the first one?

Cravath: Well, I think that's in order, don't you?

Teiser: Yes, if you'd like to.

Cravath: Well, it was right after I'd moved up here. Dorothy's and my old friend Walter Goldberg decided that neither of us had been to Europe and it was a pity and we should go. So he presented us with round-trip air tickets to Rome. That's how we happened to go.

Harroun: You had known him--

Cravath: Dorothy and I, many years ago when we were doing sets and costumes for the Players Club. He was the property man and we'd known him since--well, that must have been '26 or '27. He's the younger brother of Rube Goldberg, the cartoonist, who, in his last years, was modeling little figures, doing little sculpture bronzes. He had several exhibitions of them. He did little figures in caricature that were quite charming.

Teiser: So you took quite a tour, you and Dorothy.

Cravath: Yes. We flew from New York to Paris and we were two weeks in Paris. We had two months altogether and, of course, Paris was very exciting and all my life I had pictured the Louvre and I had read about the Winged Victory, which, as a child, I thought was the most wonderful thing that had been made. My parents gave me a reproduction about twenty inches high of the Winged Victory, which I loved, and I used to read about how it was at the head of these stairs, you know, so impressive. So I just sort of dreamt about seeing it and I thought, "Well, you know, things can't be the way you've been expecting them to be all
Cravath: "...your life," but I wasn't a bit disappointed with that stairway in the front and these little figures and the bright colors and that magnificent thing at the top. It was great. Paris didn't let us down at all.

Teiser: What else interested you particularly there?

Cravath: In Paris? Oh, you couldn't list all the things. Of course, the Cluny Museum I loved. You mean beside the Louvre? We went up the Eiffel Tower and--

Teiser: No, I mean, what kind of things--were there other things like the Winged Victory that you had--

Cravath: Oh, specifically?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: Well, of course, there was also the Venus di Milo, yes. But, I mean, the setting had never been pictured by me as the Winged Victory had been. It was just as exciting to see that.

Teiser: The sculpture in Rome I suppose interested you.

Cravath: Not necessarily, not things that you were anxious to see particularly. I guess there's more sculpture in Rome, but the Greek masterpieces--there's just as many in Paris and London, I believe, as in Rome, aren't there?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: While we were in Paris we went to Chartres, and that was a very moving experience, of course. We went down on the train and spent the night, so we had part of two days at Chartres.

Then the only American Express tour we took from Paris was going to Mont-Saint Michel, and that was terrific. That was a marvelous experience. Mont-Saint Michel is just unbelievable, and we saw the tide come in around the island. After supper we watched it. And we had the famous Mere Poulard omelettes. We had to have that. We stayed at the hotel right there.

Teiser: Is there sculpture there?

Cravath: No, I don't remember any sculpture at all. It's just this beautiful architecture.
Cravath: But on the way back we stopped at this American cemetery and our guide was a very patriotic little Frenchman and he talked about General [French pronunciation] "Pattón." We were all Americans on this tour, so, believe me, we had to go and visit that cemetery. [Chuckle] Then from Paris we went to Nice and then from Nice we flew to Rome and we had ten days in Rome.

Teiser: Was there anything in Rome that particularly impressed you, as a sculptor?

Cravath: [Pauses to think.] No, I don't believe there was, really. Isn't that a funny thing to say?

Teiser: Not the great river gods?

Cravath: No. They impressed me, but I felt very removed from them. Well, the Termi museum was exciting. I haven't thought of this for a long time. We stayed quite near the Termi museum too and that was where the early things were and mosaics.

Teiser: The baths--

Cravath: Yes, the Diocletian baths. Yes, that was very exciting. It's funny how you forget so many things. But I remember some of the museums we went to in Rome were so poorly lit. You know how they'll turn on the light for you and then turn it off? It's very difficult to see some of the things, I think, in the museums in Rome.

Teiser: Dorothy must have been more frustrated. If she was more interested in painting and technique, as she was, she must often have been frustrated with the lighting.

Cravath: Oh, yes, definitely. She was, definitely.

Teiser: Then you went to London?

Cravath: Well, we took the bus from Rome to Assisi. That was a highlight. The three places of my travels that I think are the highlights are Assisi and Machu Picchu and Delphi. I mean, they're all in the same category as high points.

We went with a tour, but we knew we'd want to spend more time, so we stayed twenty-four hours in Assisi. The tour stopped
Cravath: and had lunch at the Hotel Giotto. Well, we'd been told that's where we should stay and we stayed at the Hotel Giotto. We had a room with a balcony that opened over the Umbrian valley. It was really a heavenly twenty-four hours in Assisi.

And it is so amazing to go from Rome to Assisi and realize that it's the same church, the Roman Catholic Church. It's a totally different feeling in Assisi. There is a spiritual quality there that is hard to find sometimes in Rome, you know.

Anyway, we stayed in the Hotel Giotto and we had lunch with the tour and we went to the basilica.* The guide was a young--well, not so young--Scotch Franciscan priest, and he was very enthused, of course, about the Giottos and he took the whole tour all around the basilica and pointed out all the Giottos and so forth.

At the end of that, the other people all left and got in the bus and went to Padua or some place. So I went to the priest and I said, "My sister and I are artists and we're staying over for twenty-four hours. What is the best time, the best light, to see these?" You know, we wanted to come back. He said, "You meet me here at three o'clock after the tour buses are all gone." I said, "Oh, we didn't mean to impose." And he was so thrilled to have somebody that really appreciated them, and we had a wonderful time with him. He went around with us again, you see, right after the tours had left. And then, when we left, he said, "Now, you come back here at five-thirty. There is going to be a procession." It was the Feast of St. Anthony. So, we did.

The procession was from the basilica down into the crypt. First there were all the priests and the monks, and they were all chanting, and all the nuns went by, then all the children of the village, all the babies, with flowers, and Dorothy and I bringing up the rear [laughter] of this procession. It was really a wonderful experience to see Assisi just, you know, alive! I was very grateful to him for telling us that. Didn't Dorothy tell you about that?

Harroun: No, but she had said that St. Anthony was her saint.

*The Basilica of San Francesco
Cravath: Well, he ought to be. We sang this chant to St. Anthony. [Laughter] Always during this whole procession the chant went on: "San Antonio, San Antonio--." He kept finding things. Dorothy couldn't lose anything.

Harroun: Well, she said she always prayed to St. Anthony. [Laughter]

Cravath: She may have and it's a good thing she celebrated his Feast Day properly, and we did.

Well, that was the evening; the next morning we hired a taxi to take us out to the little hermitage, you know, and the cave where Brother Leo slept, and it is the tiniest little chapel in the world, I think, almost. And there was the famous tree. It was there and it was very charming. There were about four Franciscans in residence, I think, and there was this tiny little chapel. It's just so simple and so small. And there are the caves, Brother Leo's cave, and the tree, which the Franciscan said regretfully he thought was dying or something. I'm glad I saw it when it was still alive. But it was a lovely experience. It was so beautiful.

Then we went out to the big church where St. Claire held the monstrance up, you know, and we saw all the relics of St. Claire and where she'd been and so forth. So, that was a wonderful morning. We had time to do these things.

Then we went on to--let's see--Ravenna. I guess that was our next stop, naturally, to see the mosaics.

Teiser: Dorothy must have gone wild!

Cravath: She went wild and so did I, yes. We stayed over in Ravenna so that we had plenty of time to see the St. Apollinare in Classe, and San Vitale in town. There are two big churches. Well, there are so many churches and so many mosaics in Ravenna. The first afternoon we were visiting the big Church of St. Apollinare Nuovo, I think it is, in the town, and there were a lot of people there. Then it got later and it started to rain. It was pouring rain and there were only two other people left in the church besides Dorothy and me, a couple, and we noticed they had camp chairs and they had opera glasses. Oh, Dorothy had purchased binoculars in Rome so that we could see all the mosaics. Well, there were a lot of mosaics in Rome that we saw too, of course, so we had those binoculars and they had their opera glasses, and they'd move on and on and on.
Cravath: Well, then it got so dark in there we couldn't see anything and it was pouring rain, so we went out. They had a little shop where they'd sell slides and postal cards and we were looking at reproductions. We chatted with the couple, who were from Stanford. He was a history professor; Brand, I think his name was.* I think he was just retired and they were taking a long tour. They knew so much.

Well, of course, they loved meeting Dorothy. We decided, the four of us, to hire the taxi the next day to take us out to the St. Apollinare in Classe, you see, because we were all traveling on a shoestring, as it were. So we went out there together, and then I think we took the same bus to Venice, because after Ravenna we went to Venice.

The four of us went out to Torcello together and that was a terrific experience. There's a marvelous church in Torcello and there's a famous restaurant there where we had lunch afterwards. But we enjoyed the Brands very much and the last time we saw them was at—what is it?—10 Downing Place in London [laughter], looking in. That was our last encounter with them, but it was interesting because he knew the history and Dorothy knew the art, and it was a good combination.

Teiser: Had Dorothy got the binoculars by the time you saw the Sistine Chapel?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Yes. Oh, indeed she had! The Sistine Chapel, because there were so many people, I think, was a little disappointment to me. I mean, it was the first disappointment on the whole trip because Paris didn't let me down at all. But, oh, such masses of people! You could hardly turn around. It was hard to see things and people were always wanting to borrow her binoculars. Once in a while she'd let them look. But it was really almost an ordeal with those masses.

I guess we went from Assisi to Florence, and then Florence to Ravenna.

Teiser: Florence must have been interesting for you.

Cravath: Oh, it was just one of the highlights too. Florence was just marvelous! We only had five days there. I wish we'd had more.

*Carl F. Brand
Cravath: And we were going to go to Siena, but we decided at the beginning of the trip that we couldn't see everything in two months and we were going to enjoy what we could see, enjoy it and not worry about what we couldn't see. So, following that decision, we decided not to go to Siena and to have the extra time in Florence.

Teiser: Did you have many great experiences in seeing sculpture in Florence?

Cravath: I have to admit that when we were there that five days we didn't get to the Accademia, and I think I had more great experiences this last trip in '74 because we got to the Accademia. The first thing I wanted to do, and so did Dorothy in Florence, was to go to St. Mark's to see the Fra Angelicos. I think the first trip the paintings and the frescoes meant more to me than the sculpture. But when I went back this last time I saw more sculpture. But the great frescoes were so exciting in Florence.

I did tell you about the little verger in the church opening up this hinged Baroque painting and showing us a Giotto under it, which was my comfort when my stations were covered.*

Teiser: Yes. Well, this last time you were impressed by the sculpture in the Accademia?

Cravath: Yes.

I remember going to the Etruscan museum. That was the day I got lost. Dorothy loved to go to fish markets everywhere, and I didn't like fish markets, so she went to look at markets and I went to the Etruscan museum. [Laughter] I just don't like the smell of fish markets. She couldn't get me to enthuse over fish markets. I remember in Venice and--[laughter]. Oh, well, anyway, I could do without them.

Well, she was going to look at some kind of markets and I wanted to go to the Etruscan museum. Well, I had a hard time. It's hard for me to find things in Florence, but I found it, and I had a wonderful time. Then I was supposed to meet her at Doney's, on the Via Tournabouni, where you get American goodies and stuff. It was kind of like the Blum's of Florence.

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Cravath: Well, there was a woman next door that had a little place called "Information Please" to help tourists. Edie had known her, Edie Hamlin, and so she had told us to go to see her. She was very charming and helpful and told you where to shop and so forth. It was right next door, I think, to Doney's. It wasn't there this last time.

Anyway, I was supposed to meet Dorothy at Doney's at a certain time. So, I left the Etruscan museum and hurried to get there and got so lost, so turned around, that finally I sat down somewhere with a map, and finally I found myself on the Via Tournabouni, where I was supposed to be. [Laughter] I rushed right by Doney's. Dorothy rushed out and grabbed me. [Laughter] At least I was on the right street! Oh, dear!

Teiser: The sculpture there--

Cravath: The sculpture. Michelangelo's "Captives," yes, they really moved me greatly.

Teiser: I should think that you're the only person I know who could look at them and really understand them, because there must be so much matter of technique.

Cravath: How do you mean? I mean, they maybe are unfinished, but--

Teiser: Yes. I mean, you might find them more interesting than if they were finished.

Cravath: Yes, I think so. I tried to get pictures. None of the pictures of them came out because there wasn't enough light and, of course, there are replicas of the David all over the place, and that is the original David. Let's see. There's one in the court of the Palazzo Vecchio. And then there's one way up toward San Miniato, you know, the Piazzale Michelangelo. I loved that place, that San Miniato Church. I just loved that whole area. We went up there twice because we both loved that very much. We rode up and walked back down through the Boboli Gardens, you know, where we weren't supposed to be, I think, through some people's back yards and things. But one thing about Florence that's lovely is that you can walk nearly everywhere that you want to go.

We went from Florence to Ravenna, and then to Milan. We took a bus for all these things, so we saw quite a bit on the way. We stopped--where is the great Palladian theatre?
Harroun: Vicenza.

Cravath: Vicenza. Well, we stopped there and that was very exciting.

I liked some of the sculpture in Venice, you know, around San Marco's, those carvings. We'd seen so many mosaics that I think Dorothy almost had her fill of mosaics by the time we got to San Marco, but we did enjoy Venice very much, particularly this trip to Torcello, and we stopped at Murano, the glass-blowing place, and that was fun. Dorothy bought some glasses. She had those beautiful red glasses sent back from there.

Teiser: The places where you saw things that related specifically to things that you'd known about and were professionally interested in--more sculpture than mosaics--

Cravath: Well, this, of course, was true in Ravenna. Let's see. This was in 1959, and in 1961, you know, I started the project which carried me into eighty-eight mosaic panels. [Chuckle] They're not of the quality of Dorothy's, but I feel as if I've done a few mosaics now. [Laughter]

Teiser: Golly! I didn't mean to insult you! [Laughter]

Cravath: [Laughter] No, you don't. But we haven't come to that project yet. That's part of the '60s. No, the mosaics were very terrific for me. I mean, I hadn't done mosaics yet, but I was interested and I was very glad to have had that experience when I did do them.

Then in Milan, one of the outstanding things, of course, is The Last Supper. It is just absolutely fantastic, the way it relates to that refectory.

And then we went to the Brera museum there. We arrived in Milan in the evening in a pouring, pouring, pouring, pouring rain and we were to meet our friend Emily Michels, who went to art school with us, and she was the best person in my sculpture class, a brilliant sculptor. She was there. She telephoned that night and it was pouring rain, so she came over and had breakfast with us the next morning and we spent a half a day together. Then I think she left in the middle of the day and we left for Switzerland.
Cravath: We flew to Zurich, "overflew the Alps." (Dorothy loved that comment of the pilot, or the guide.) Then from Zurich we went to Basel, I think. Isn't that the procedure? And that was very interesting.

I can't remember the sequence, but we did go to Stuttgart and we had a couple of days there. Then we flew to Amsterdam.

But before we went to Stuttgart, I think, we went to Colmar to see the famous altarpiece, you know, there. Colmar was very interesting. I mean, it was just that church and that old sculpture and the famous paintings and the altarpiece that is very, very moving.

And then Amsterdam. We had a few days there. Of course, you think of Rembrandt in Amsterdam, the museum. And we went out to some of the islands and got cheeses and things. It was very, very hot. We were there on the Fourth of July. Terribly hot!

Then we flew to London from Amsterdam, where we stayed with Vera Nelson Jones. Do you remember her?

Harroun: Oh, yes.

Cravath: Of course you do. You knew her. She was in the house when you were, wasn't she?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: We stayed with her and her husband, Nelson, and Richard was there, who had been a little boy during the war, and he was a very nice young man and took us around. Nelson was charming, showing us London. We only had one trip to the British Museum, but that is so big it's almost tantalizing.
TRAVELS IN EUROPE; SECOND TRIP

Cravath: I got up out of the sickbed this last time to go there. I'd just come from Greece, so, of course, I had to see the Elgin marbles. The doctor said I could go, but I must take a taxi both ways.

Teiser: Did you and Dorothy see the Elgin marbles?
Cravath: No. I'm sure we didn't when we were there.

Teiser: Were you impressed with them this trip?
Cravath: Well, coming from Greece, not too impressed. I mean, I have photographs. I mean, it's something that you've seen so much and you can see in photographs. And, of course, I had a bad cold, so maybe that affected me, my appreciation. But I wanted to see them and I'm glad I did.

Let's see. We're on the first trip to London now. Well, we did quite a few things that one should do. We were about a week in London and then we flew home.

Teiser: This last trip, then, was your second trip to Europe?
Cravath: Right, my second trip to Europe.

Teiser: Did you see other things then that impressed you that you hadn't seen the first time?
Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, I had two weeks in Paris and I saw things. For instance, I was very happy to be able to introduce my hostess, Audrey Evans to Bourdelle--I stayed with her in her apartment, overlooking the Luxembourg Gardens. We would walk through the Luxembourg Gardens every morning. But she had never been to [Antoine] Bourdelle's museum and home and studio, had never heard of it as a matter of fact. And she is very allergic to museums. I didn't realize at first. She wouldn't go to the Louvre with me. Well, that was fine because I'd much rather go alone, so I went several times to the Louvre. I'd walk from her place to the Louvre and back, you see. She was just near Boulevard Saint Michel. The street is Rue Michelet.

Well, anyway, it was a wonderful experience to go to Bourdelle's museum because he was one of my heroes when I went to art school and was studying sculpture.
Cravath: I suppose that the Bourdelle Museum was in existence when Dorothy and I were there, but we didn't see it. (But we didn't get to the Rodin Museum that time.) We went to the Bourdelle Museum, Audrey and I, and she seemed to enjoy it and said she could see the influence in my work, you know. There were casts of everything he'd done. Just everything was there—models and plaster casts and bronzes outside.

It had been his home and his studio and there's a little courtyard. You must go the next time you go to Paris. It's on the Rue d'Antoine Bourdelle, a little street they named for him too.

Then that afternoon we went to the Rodin Museum. Well, you couldn't get Audrey inside of that. She sat out in the park on the bench. You go in the gate. It's this big mansion partly, but the building to the right I thought was the museum. I went in there. It wasn't Rodin's work in there; it was an exhibition of contemporary sculptures from Paris, which was interesting to see, so I got to see what the contemporary sculptors were doing.

Then on the grounds are Rodins, and then the great big elegant house is full of his things. So I had quite a day, with Bourdelle in the morning and Rodin in the afternoon. Those are two experiences I hadn't had the first time.

Then we went out to the great cemetery where everybody's buried. What is that?

Teiser: Pere Lachaise?

Cravath: Yes, Pere Lachaise. I always forget the name. I remember freezing to death out there, but it was fascinating to see, to wander through that cemetery.

Teiser: There's a good deal of sculpture there?

Cravath: It isn't that. Well, it's the gardening and the landscaping and all these famous people, you know, all the artists and writers and so forth. That's what makes it interesting.

Let's see. We took another trip on the bateau mouche and, of course, had a wonderful time climbing up in Notre Dame. I just love those gargoyles up around the top of Notre Dame.
Cravath: That's wonderful sculpture. And Audrey liked that too; that wasn't a museum. [Laughter] And I went several times to the Cluny, which was in walking distance of where she lived. I'm very fond of the Cluny.

Teiser: What there particularly?

Cravath: Nothing particular stands out, but all the wonderful carvings and the tapestries and, well, of course, the stone carvings always appeal to me particularly, but not necessarily when I can see mosaics too and paintings. [Chuckle]

Let's see. Then we took the train from Paris to Florence and we stayed at the same pensione where Dorothy and I stayed on the Arno, the Consigli. It was lovely weather while we were there. The first afternoon I think I went over to the Carmine to see the Masaccios again and they have better light on them now, but it's kind of difficult to see them even so. But they've installed lights that they turn on.

And, as I say, this last time I did get to the Accademia and went to St. Mark's again, but, oh, there's so many people there! You know, just masses! This was in April, the first part of April. Well, I guess there are always tourists in Florence.

Dorothy and I didn't get up to Fiesole, and Audrey loves that. We went up to Fiesole and that was interesting. We saw the Roman Theatre there and we didn't see the inside of the church because it was closed till three o'clock and we had a date to have tea with Raymond and Esther Puccinelli that afternoon. So we came back and had an awfully nice time with Raymond and Esther in Raymond's studio.

We just had a week in Florence, so it wasn't too much time. This time I was going to Siena. I didn't get there this time. I'm fated against Siena. I had a letter from a friend of Marchand's; that is, Marchand [Epstein] had given me her name and her telephone number, and we were to visit her on the way, and she was supposed to be near Siena, but not very. Colle Val d'Elsa was the name of the place. She had made this beautiful home out of a barn, an old medieval barn. Oh, it was just the most beautiful place! Her husband is a painter. She took us to lunch at San Simignano. That was a lovely restaurant. We had a very happy time.
Then we were going to go from there to Siena, but the day was well spent by that time. We had to change busses some place, and Audrey said she wasn't going to; she was tired and she was going back. Well, I thought, "Oh, I'd better go to Siena," I mean, by myself. I got off the bus and I was supposed to transfer and I didn't have my handbag! I'd left my handbag with my passport and everything that's in it. Audrey was waiting for the bus to go back to Florence and she said the last she'd seen me I looked so happy and then I was absolutely stricken. I said, "Audrey, I've lost my handbag." She said, "Get right back in that bus and look for it." Well, she used her head. I was paralyzed. So, there was the bus I'd gotten off of standing there. I explained to the driver that I'd left something. I got on and walked through the bus and there was my handbag. Wasn't that a--!

Well, by that time, the bus had gone on to Siena and I was pretty tired and my foot was bothering me a lot. So, I went back to Florence with Audrey and was awfully glad I didn't go to Siena. I was getting a cold too. She went to Siena the next day while I was resting. I didn't know where she was going. She left in the morning. She said it was a good thing I didn't go. It was so confusing and so crowded. So, a second time I missed Siena.

Teiser: But you got to Greece this year?

Cravath: Yes. Then at the end of our week in Florence, we took the train the rest of the way to Rome because we had a railroad ticket from Paris to Rome with a stop-over in Florence. We just changed from the train to the airplane and flew to Athens and I arrived there absolutely speechless, without any voice at all, a terrible cold.

So I went to bed and got a Greek doctor who could speak English, and I said, "Doctor, I'm seventy-two years old. I'm a sculptor and I've wanted to go to Greece all my life and you've got to make me well." And he did. [Laughter] I could see the Acropolis from my bed! We had this hotel in the Plaka, Hotel Phoebus, and we had a balcony. Right from my bed, right through the window, there was the Acropolis. I could see the Parthenon up there. So I stayed in bed that first day looking at the Acropolis and taking all the medicine he told me. He gave me antibiotics and this and this and this. The next day I got up and walked up to the Acropolis. [Laughter] My voice
Cravath: was coming back by that time, and so I felt fine the rest of
the time I was in Greece until the day before we left, when
a cold descended on me again. I'd never had that happen before.

So I arrived in London sick and I got a doctor there. I
felt even worse there and I had a temperature, apparently.
He came to see me in the evening and he said he had to come
the next day to the hotel to see somebody else and he'd stop
in and see me. I was better and he said I could get up and go
to the British Museum if I'd take a taxi [laughter], so I got
up and went.

Then we had lunch on the Sunday that we were there--we
were just there a few days--with Vera Nelson Jones. She hadn't
met Audrey. Vera had moved and she was separated from Nelson
again. Her youngest son, who was born after she went back to
London after the war, was there and he's a young solicitor too.
She has two sons who are solicitors. That's what they are in
England. Richard, the other one, is teaching. I didn't see
Richard, but I did see John, the older one. He came that after-
noon with his two little boys.

Then Monday--I guess it was the next day--I flew back to
the United States and stopped in Mt. Holyoke and visited my
childhood friend, Louise Taylor Holmes.

MEXICO AND SOUTH AMERICA

Teiser: You went to Mexico in '54 and '69
Cravath: Yes.
Teiser: Did those trips enrich your life in any unprecedented ways?
Cravath: Oh, very much so.
Teiser: Have your trips to Mexico influenced you one way and another?
Cravath: Well, I think any experience influences you that impresses you
very much. The first time I went to Mexico I went with three
friends in a car. There were four of us, which made it very
nice getting around, and of course we went out to Teotihuacán,
the Pyramid of the Sun, and the Pyramid of the Moon. That was
1954.
Cravath: What interested me very much were the changes in Mexico City and in Teotihuacán between '54 and '69. It was so changed. Things were tidied up, and the greatest change too was the Guadalupe, which, when we went there in '54, was this dusty path that you walked up to the shrine full of little merchants selling all this junk on the way. It was very messy, but interesting from the human standpoint. Now it's all beautiful and elegant and all the merchants are down in a certain area; you don't have to see them at all. You don't even dare throw a match or a thing. It's so tidy, the walk that goes up to the shrine from the big basilica of Guadalupe. Well, it was a terrific change.

And, of course, they were working on their subway, their underground BART or whatever you call it, when we were there and I understand that's finished and operating now.

The biggest thing, though, in Mexico is the greatest museum in the world probably, which had been built between our trips, you see. So, it was a totally different experience the second time.

Harroun: This was the archaeological--

Cravath: It's called the Anthropological Museum, but it's archaeological too. It is just simply magnificent. Just to go to Mexico for a week and go out there every day, you could have a terrific experience of traveling all over Mexico, through the history of Mexico, and that is when you're impressed with the sculpture. It is so beautiful and so varied and so magnificent! The different cultures, the different periods, the different areas are presented in a very direct and unconfusing manner. It is just beautiful!

Teiser: Were you also in other areas of Mexico?

Cravath: The first trip, yes. We were in Mexico City and it was a wonderful experience. At that time, I didn't see the Aztec ruins right near the cathedral, which I saw this time. I'm sure they were there. Just a stone's throw from the great cathedral are ruins; they've dug down Aztec ruins that you can see.

But, you see, we lived out in one of the neighborhoods the first time and there was a guide with Wells Fargo, and his wife, and we were sort of house guests there. I mean, they
Cravath: took paying guests. But this last time Edie and I lived right downtown not far from the center and the Opera House and so forth. So I walked around.

Teiser: Edith Hamlin?

Cravath: Yes, this last time.

Well, anyway, the first time we went from Mexico to Oaxaca. We drove to Mexico and we came down the west coast from Mazatlan over to Morelia and Patzcuaro and Guadalajara. Then we went from Mexico City to Oaxaca, which was a very impressive place and a highlight for me. The Monte Alban, as I think of it, was one of the outstanding experiences, and I liked Patzcuaro, Lake Patzcuaro. But as far as the carvings and the ruins and the beauty of the country are concerned, Mitla, which is near Oaxaca and Monte Alban, are superb. The mosaic work in Mitla, which is a different kind of mosaic—it's these little stones put together without any mortar in the building wall—is magnificent.

But Monte Alban is going to be more and more exciting because they've lots more mounds to excavate. So my great-grandchildren will have a wonderful time, I think, and see a lot more than I did. But it was fascinating to go through those excavations and the tombs.

Teiser: You've been in South America also. That was in 1973?

Cravath: Yes. Well, I'll quickly tell you about where we went the second trip to Mexico because it was quite an experience of sculpture. We hadn't gone to Vera Cruz on the first trip. I went with Edith Hamlin and that's when I found the great changes in Mexico City and saw many things I hadn't before, which weren't there, like the big museum.

Then we went to Vera Cruz. We stopped in Pueblo on the way, but I had been briefly in Pueblo before. And Vera Cruz. And Jalapa, where the University of Verz Cruz is, and there's a beautiful museum with great sculptures there. That was a sculptural highlight experience. But it's very interesting because you can hardly tell where the university is. All over the town of Jalapa there are buildings that are part of the university. There's not one great big building. And then the museum is sort of way out on the edge of town, and it's all a part of the university.
Cravath: We were in Jalapa on Easter Sunday and we weren't as crazy about Jalapa as we might have been, although we enjoyed the museum. We suddenly decided that while we were in the state of Vera Cruz we would go to Papantla to go to the great ruin of El Tajin.

So, Easter Sunday we got on the bus and we went to Papantla and there was one hotel there where we stayed. We arrived in the late afternoon and the next day we hired a taxi that takes you out to the ruins of El Tajin. There was a certain charge for taking you out there and I think you had an hour or forty-five minutes or something to look around, or one hour, and back.

So we'd made arrangements to go and stay twice as long. He didn't charge much more since it was only one trip. We knew that the prescribed time wouldn't be enough for us. And that is a very beautiful experience, the ruins at El Tajin, the great monuments, and there there are so many motifs that are like Greek motifs. It's fascinating.

Anyway, then, from there we went back to Mexico City and there were lots of experiences on those buses, which I won't stop and tell you, but I will tell you that most of the bus drivers in Mexico are driving around under the auspices of the Virgin. You see her in the front of the bus. But this trip to Mexico City was second or third class bus; it was all we could get. He was a good driver and we were making the trip under the auspices of the devil. He was hanging right up in front. [Laughter] Edie didn't notice that at first. I got such a kick out of this little devil dangling there. He got us back to Mexico City anyway.

Then Edie wanted to take the Mexican train. We took the train from Mexico City to Mexicali and we had a pleasant surprise, which was a whole half day in Guadalajara the next morning, so we were able to leave the train and go downtown in Guadalajara, where they have a new market. We saw changes there from the time I had been there before. And home. That was Mexico in '69.

Then in '72-'73--in December of '72 we went to Colombia and then New Year's we went over to Peru, so we were gone a month. In Columbia we stayed at a Swiss chalet. This was a tour that was organized in Salt Lake City called the River
Cravath: Trips Tour. The trip was in the jungle in Columbia.

Teiser: How did you happen to decide to do that?

Cravath: Well, Edie talked me into it. She and her friend who had been in Mexico City with us in '69, Elizabeth Sprang, who lived in Utah, had gotten interested in this. Then we got Marjorie Eaton. There were four of us that went.

This was a very interesting experience going through this river trip into the jungle this day. We saw quite a bit of Colombia from that and we had Christmas day at this Swiss chalet and it was very nice.

But the sculpture and archaeological experience from that was going to San Augustine. The ruins have just been recently excavated and set up, some of them in 1970, these marvelous sculptures. They don't know very much about them. That's in southern Colombia. I have pictures of these to show you.

Anyway, then from there we flew to Bogota, which is the city we visited on our way to the chalet and on our way back, on our way to Lima. We flew from Bogota to Lima and that was over the New Year's weekend. A lot of things were closed. I seem to be fated to do that because I was in Athens on the Easter weekend when everything was closed this last year.

But we had a wonderful guide, Olga, who took us out to some of the museums and showed us some of the ruins around Lima. It was very, very hot there and very sticky. But we had a couple of days that were quite interesting.

Then you fly from Lima to Cuzco, which was the capitol of the Inca empire, and that is a fascinating place. The altitude is very high. That's where people get altitude sickness, so you have to be very careful. It's 11,500 feet or something like that. The walls right in the town, part of the walls, are Inca walls and it is really very fascinating.

It was from Cuzco that we went to Machu Picchu, which was the high point, I think, of the trip, really. You take this train, and we stayed over night at Machu Picchu to have enough time, as we did in Assisi, Dorothy and I. And it rained. I got soaking wet the first afternoon. Edie and I just couldn't tear ourselves away from these fascinating ruins. The next day it was beautiful. I took some lovely pictures. Some of the rainbow at Machu Picchu.
Cravath: Well, the interesting thing, there's no sculpture left there at all. You see sculpture in the museum in Cuzco and you see some in Lima. They did lots and lots and lots of ceramic clay sculpture. But you can see places where they probably had some. But there are two magnificent pieces of sculpture in Machu Picchu—abstractions. One is the Hitching Post of the Sun. It seems that on the 21st of December the Inca priest would tie the sun to this so that it would stop going south, so that it would come north again. And sure enough, it would! [Chuckle] But it is the most beautiful abstract sculpture carved, as Elizabeth Sprang said, right out of the living stone. It's a marvelous thing.

Then there's my pet that I didn't discover, but nobody else talked about it, which I call the "funeral stone," at the opposite end of Machu Picchu where the cemetery was. We went up to the cemetery and here is this beautiful piece of abstract sculpture pointing straight east, I guess, toward the sun. It is also carved. It's a different shape, but also a beautiful abstraction. It was used in some religious way. I call it the "funeral stone" and I took many, many pictures of that. It was raining when I took some of them and it looks like it's polished because it's shiny wet, but the pictures came out. It was just a miracle that I was able to get pictures when it was wet and rainy.

But part of the time we were in Machu Picchu the sun came out, and the clouds moved in and would cover up the mountains, and then they'd move away. Oh, it was such a beautiful place!

Well, that's only a part of Peru, but I can't tell you everything about Peru.

"MOTHER AND INFANT"

Teiser: The next thing we have listed on the outline is "Social Concerns" and that's a whole different subject.

Cravath: [Laughter] Well, I haven't much to say on that!

Teiser: Well, do you want to go on ahead and say the little you have? Maybe I misinterpreted some things you have done.
Cravath: Well, yes, you may have thought much—I notice that you have as the first thing [reading from outline]: "Planned Parenthood Association exhibit, 1961, Mother and Infant." I did Mother and Infant about 1935. What happened in 1961 was I was asked to collect works of art that related to motherhood because they were trying to emphasize the positive part of Planned Parenthood, not just the prevention, you see. So, knowing quite a few artists and things available, I helped them get together an exhibition on the subject, and the one of mine that was included was my white marble Mother and Infant.

Teiser: Apparently used as kind of theme, was it?

Cravath: Well, yes. It was exactly the thing they wanted, and they used it for publicity. They came here and took pictures of it.

Teiser: So it wasn't that you were especially active in the Planned Parenthood organization?

Cravath: No, they came to me and asked for this. But of course I was interested in Planned Parenthood. I have to tell you an amusing story about that though. I was teaching at the St. Rose Academy, which is a Catholic school, at the time, and you know what their point of view would have been in 1961 about birth control. After that there was a dinner at the school that I had to go to. I mean, it was a pleasure to go. Mrs. Archer was a non-Catholic teacher. I don't know whether she was an Episcopalian or what. But she taught what we called in the old days elocution and drama, reading, and so forth, and I think poetry writing. She was sitting way down at the other end of the table, and this publicity had just come out with a picture of my Mother and Infant, you see, and my name that was being used for this Planned Parenthood exhibit. She was sitting way down next to the principal and she started it. She passed this clipping up to me.

Fortunately, it got to me before it got to the hierarchy. [Laughter] I was sitting at the other end. When it got to me, I took one look at it and I just folded it up and put it in my handbag.

I talked to Sister Leonard, who was my dear friend there, and I think Sister David was principal. It was an important affair. There was some kind of—what do they call it? You know, the officials were checking on the school and so forth.
Cravath: So I talked to Sister Leonard afterwards, and we laughed about it. I said, "Wasn't she a devil to do that, Mrs. Archer?" [Laughter] Anyway, so much for that, for my Planned Parenthood.

Then, subsequently, this statue--it was under the tree there in the stoneyard--was stolen. I went out to a dinner and a movie with friends one night and I came back quite late, about midnight, and the next morning I was watering the yard all the way around and all of a sudden I got to that tree and it was gone. Due to an article in the [San Francisco] Chronicle, it was returned. It was in 1962, because David Tollerton and I were working on the mosaics. At ten o'clock in the morning this chap knocked on the studio door and he said he knew where my statue was. He had the paper in his hand and his wife said, "That's that lady over on Wisconsin Street. You'd better do something about it." So he wanted to return it.

He said these kids had brought it to him at midnight and tried to sell it to him for five dollars. He was the one who had taken it, I think, and so did David. But he said that he'd have them bring it back after school, but he wanted to keep their noses clean. He didn't want them to get in any trouble. They didn't know how much it was worth. The paper said (you know how they put a price mark on everything--the age of a person and a price mark are what seem to be the important things about newspaper publicity) two thousand dollars. He said they didn't know it was worth that much and I said, "It doesn't make any difference whether it was two dollars or two thousand dollars; the principle was the same," and I glared at him and he agreed with me, of course.

Before noon he arrived with it. He said his brother-in-law had come along with a car. He didn't wait for these kids whose noses he wanted to keep clean. And they brought it back. I think he thought it was hot goods when it came out in the paper. So I have that to thank the Chronicle for, the recovery of that.

I think he was the one. Subsequently the man who lived across the street and who was with the Chronicle in the crime department came over one day to get the name. I have the name and telephone number of this fellow. He had had some plants ripped off from his porch, you see, and he found them; this fellow had them. So apparently he had a longing for garden things, plants, et cetera. And he said he told him if there was anything more like that on the hill he'd rip things to pieces.
Cravath: He scared him, so he didn't take anything from us, anyway.

Oh, you mention here [on the outline] the Artists' Letter Fund against atomic testing. Yes, I put my name to that in 1962. You know, it was a whole sheet in the New York Times.

Teiser: Was it something that you were very active in?

Cravath: I wasn't active in it, but I had strong feelings about it, yes. I mean, I just signed it.

Teiser: Against atomic testing, and it was to make a manifesto on general peace?

Cravath: Yes. Right.

Teiser: Have you been active in any women's equality organizations?

Cravath: No, no.

Teiser: You have a general sentiment in favor of it?

Cravath: I have a sentiment in favor of it, yes. Definitely. But I don't like a lot of unattractive things about so-called women's lib.
JURYING EXHIBITS
(Interview 8, March 13, 1975)

Teiser: I happened to notice that you had juried two exhibits in the '60s, but I really thought it would be interesting to put on the record all of your jurying experiences and your thoughts on the subject. Both selecting the material to go into shows and awarding prizes.

Cravath: Well, years ago when the San Francisco Art Association had its big annual show the painting and the sculpture and the graphics were all one show and there was usually a jury of five; I mean, always, I would say, of five artists, completely artists that judged their peers.

I think the first time I was on one of those juries--I was the youngest member, I guess--it was in the '20s. Mrs. Albright and Gottardo Piazziioni and Ralph Stackpole and some of the old guard were often on the juries. It was called a jury of selection and hanging committee, because this was before the San Francisco Museum had opened, which I believe was '34 or '35, so the annuals were different places.

I remember the first one I ever exhibited in, which was before this, was at the Palace of Fine Arts and I was very thrilled, of course, when the jury accepted a piece of work that I had done.

Well, anyway, apropos of the name of the jury, I remember a friend of my mother's once--I said I was on a jury, a selection and hanging committee, and he thought it was a murder case, a criminal case, and he was infuriated that they'd put such a young girl on a hanging committee! [Laughter] I remember that was an amusing incident of probably my earliest jurying experience.
Cravath: I was on a number of juries for the San Francisco Art Association over the years because, you see, this was fifty years ago; and also for the Women Artists. They also had juries of not only members; they would have other artists because it didn't seem to be fair to members to disqualify themselves because they were on the jury or to take advantage of being shown because they were on the jury. So there were outside members too.

I think I told you before that when I was president of the Women Artists, I feel rather guilty because I started this thing of having an outside expert. We had Donald Bear come up from Santa Barbara and jury the Women Artists' show. We discussed this before.*

Anyway, so as long as the museums had these big shows of the organization and there were artist juries, I really feel that that probably was a better system than the current system for juries, which is usually critics and museum directors. I sort of think that for artists to judge their peers is a little bit more valid, perhaps. I don't know. But nowadays it's quite different.

One of the last juries that I remember being on, and it may not have been the last one, was when I was down on Montgomery Street in the '50s for the Art Association annual. I tell you this story because it was my introduction to one of our very fine artists, Henri Marie-Rose, who lives here on the hill now. I got on the 41 bus and a very interesting trio of people got on the bus afterwards—a tall, blondish, very handsome woman and a short fellow. They were all speaking French. I forget the third person, a man. But it was Majorie Marie-Rose and Henri, her husband. He is short, and he's from Martinique, so he has kinky hair. He's just a charming little person. And here's this tall blonde; she's his wife. Well, I didn't know who they were, but I was so interested in this trio. They were just speaking French and so un-self-conscious, you see.

Soon after that I was on the jury for sculpture. Well, the juries then changed. They'd have a special jury for sculpture—I'm going back now—and a jury for painting. But in the early days, one jury did everything, sculpture and painting. Anyway, I was on the sculpture jury. There was a piece by one of the artists by the name—I'd never heard the name before and I was intrigued—Henri Marie-Rose. We accepted

*See p. 134.
his piece and, as a matter of fact, it was awarded a prize. This was the first time I had seen his name.

At that time, they would have before the opening preview a dinner party for the prize winners and the jurors at the museum. So, lo and behold, Henri Marie-Rose was there and we sat at the same table and he turned out to be this little Martinique Frenchman that I had seen on the bus. Now he is a neighbor of mine here on Potrero Hill, and a very good artist and a darling person.

What tradition is his sculpture in?

Well, his tradition is contemporary and it's practically—not all metal sculpture because he has combined metal with stones and found objects. As a matter of fact, one of his big things that you can see is in the Comstock Apartments on California Street, just inside the entrance. It's metal and it's quite large and quite handsome, I think. I think it's a dreadful foyer and the building offends me because it covers up Grace Cathedral, but I like Henri's sculpture.

Is he representational or non-representational?

He is both. His representational work is sort of abstracted, but representational. He did a beautiful portrait of Sarah Bolles for John Bolles, a head in lead, which is a sort of a stylized portrait, but it's a portrait; it has the essence of the girl and it's a very handsome piece. So I would say some of his things are non-representational, but most of them have a representational quality, but very abstracted representations, shall we say.

You gave him a prize?

We gave him a prize. I know I was on the jury of selection and I think we probably did the prizes too. So I think that was his first exhibit with the Art Association. They hadn't been in this country very long and I think they were living in North Beach. Subsequently they bought a house here on Arkansas Street. He was one of the artists that we were discussing before that moved up here from North Beach—Gurdon Woods and Suzie Coons and Charlie Farr, who'd all lived in North Beach. It's kind of interesting, from Telegraph Hill to Potrero Hill.

When you have a group jurying, is there generally a consensus, or does it often split?
Cravath: Well, it often splits and it's necessary to have an odd number, you see. Sometimes if the juries want to be very, very strict they require four out of five to get a thing in. I mean the jury makes up its own rules and often there's quite a bit of argument too because they usually go through a group of work as a jury and there are certain things that are definitely in--I mean, everybody would agree on this and accept it. Then there are some things that are equally unanimously rejected. Then there's a great bit, in-between, doubtful pile and that's what you have to go over again, and that's when the splits and the arguments occur. That's generally the way it used to work.

But of course, there aren't the big juried shows now, so it's quite a different story nowadays.

Teiser: Sometimes everything was decided by one person?

Cravath: Yes. Well, they have had shows juried by one person. You mean the whole thing?

Teiser: The whole thing.

Cravath: Oh, yes. They would invite an expert in from out of town. As I say--

Teiser: As you did.

Cravath: As we did with this show of the Women Artists.

Teiser: Did you feel that having one person was fair?

Cravath: I think it's fair. My theory was, as I told you, that people wouldn't be so upset with one person turning them down. But of course any jury reflects somewhat the taste of either the jurors or the juror, whichever the case may be. I don't think there's any way of happily solving the jury problem to everyone's satisfaction.

Teiser: Given what it has to work with, does whatever committee handles the San Francisco Art Festival operate reasonably well?

Cravath: I think so. I think so. Of course, the Art Festivals originally were totally, you know, free-for-all and unjuried. Didn't we discuss this before?
Teiser: Yes, we did.

Your jurying shows at Fairfield and Santa Rosa in the '60s was nothing unusual, I guess.

Cravath: Well, I consider them more or less— I shouldn't say this— minor. But they weren't big. Oh, and I went to Sacramento to jury a religious art show. That was just a few years ago; a group of churches up there.

Teiser: You'd be a very well-informed juror for a liturgical art exhibit.

Cravath: Yes, that's why I was asked to be on the jury, and there were two other jurors. I think it was a pretty good choice of a jury. One was Sister Luke at the time; she now has changed her name to Sister Maria Louisa, and is, I believe, the head of the art department at Holy Names College, and a very good artist in her own right and quite a charming, brilliant woman. She was one of the jurors and she certainly was qualified. The other one was Bill Elsner from the Legion of Honor. It was pleasant because we all knew each other. But it was a good jury, I think.

Teiser: Do they frequently have somebody from a big city jury a community art show?

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: I gather that in small communities there are more often these group shows now.

Cravath: That's right, and it's their policy to get people from out of town, which is a very good one because then the juror doesn't know the people personally, so it makes it impersonal and more comfortable all around, I think, than having them juried in a small community where everybody knows everybody and it's a little awkward.

Teiser: Well, that takes care of jurying?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. But it is an interesting experience and I'm grateful for having had it in the past when there were juries of artists, because I still think that artists should jury their peers; I mean, if there's five artists on a jury. Oh, and then they went through a period of having several juries.
Cravath: I remember the Oakland Museum did this. I must bring this up, since you want this for history.

They had--what did they call it?--modern and conservative or something like that. They didn't call it avant garde, but they had the two kinds of juries so that people could designate which jury they wanted, which seems to me to be very fair, to have a big group show juried by two different juries of different points of view so they would get the best conservative or academic work, or whatever you call it, and the best modern work, as nearly as they could. But I don't think that that sort of thing exists now. I don't know about the Society of Western Artists because I'm not very close to them and I've never belonged, but I think the standard of their work has improved considerably in the last few years and they may have a double jurying system, but I don't know.

LITURGICAL WORKS, 1960-1975

Teiser: "Liturgical works of the 1960s and to date" I have here on the outline, and there's a good deal of it.

Cravath: Well, we covered the Hanna Center and the early days of the liturgical work.

Teiser: Yes, we did.

Cravath: Okay. I moved up here in 1958, and, as I think I told you, the Angel Gabriel was the last thing of the old place. As a matter of fact, the first statue that I made up here was of St. Dominic for the College of St. Albert the Great in Oakland, and St. Dominic stands out there in the garden now. That was in 1960 when I first moved up here.

Teiser: How large a figure is that, Ruth?

Cravath: About five feet high.

Teiser: Did they choose the subject?

Cravath: Well, it was to be St. Dominic, yes. What happened was Father [Fabian] Parmisano, O.P., who was a young priest over there and
Cravath: quite famous for being a very fine preacher, I hear (I heard him once and he is a brilliant preacher), was, I think, on the faculty of the college at the time, and his mother had died. His father was living and he wanted to give the statue to the college in memory of his wife, Father Parmisano's mother.

Well, at the time his father was very ill, dying of cancer, and that's the only time I ever raced death with a commission. I thought I could do it in the fall and I suggested that I commit myself to have it finished in September and so forth, and he asked me not to. He didn't know whether he'd have that much time, because he wanted his father to be present at the unveiling and the dedication. So we did it and it was dedicated in June. It was very good for me to work, you know, to have to work against a deadline. So that was the first one.

Teiser: Incidentally, do you generally meet your deadlines?

Cravath: Well, my deadlines are always very, very elastic ones, as much time as I can get so I feel comfortable within them. And this one, it was possible and it wasn't an unreasonable thing, and it worked out all right. So that was the first one on the hill.

Teiser: What material is St. Dominic?

Cravath: He's in pink Tennessee marble, one of my favorite materials, and it was a piece of marble that I'd brought up from Montgomery Street; I had it here.

Then, let's see. We're talking about liturgical art of the '60s and that was the first one, 1960. Then in 1961 or '62, I was commissioned to do these mosaic panels for the exterior of St. Mark's Sunday School in Berkeley, St. Mark's Episcopal Church Sunday School at Bancroft and Ellsworth, on the exterior. The architect suggested that he wanted somebody to design these to be done, and the material was to be inexpensive. I guess they were limited with money. The architect suggested that they be done in this Japanese tile, these cheap little square ceramic tiles. Well, as far as I know, nobody had ever made mosaics of them before. I haven't seen real mosaics done in them. It was an interesting assignment because it was hard to get the right colors.
Cravath: That was when David Tollerton was my helper, and he was invaluable because he had a truck and we went all over trying to find different colors. We had thirty-two different colors of the tile, solid colors.

The first idea was that I would design them and they might be executed by Clervi Marble Company. Well, I gave them one of the cartoons and it was impossible. They wouldn't have anything to do with it, and the architect wasn't happy. Nobody was happy. So then I got the additional contract to execute them, so I turned my studio here into a mosaic factory for several years because it involved eighty-eight panels altogether.

Teiser: Eighty-eight!

Cravath: All in these funny little cheap mosaic tiles, but it was a limitation and it was interesting.

Teiser: What were the subjects of the eighty-eight?

Cravath: Well, that was entirely up to me. It was something to make the exterior of the Sunday School brighter and more colorful and so forth. It was a slightly dull building and I think the architect came up with the idea of making it more interesting.

So I decided that since it was a Sunday School, religious symbols would be the suitable thing, you see. And I also thought that we would use as much as we could animals and bird symbols—you know, children would relate to that—and use the human figure as little as possible, and then abstract symbols. So I succeeded and only twice did I introduce a human figure where it seemed too forced not to. One was when I did the four evangelists for one section. As you know, the symbol for St. Luke is the winged ox, and for St. John the eagle, and for St. Mark (it was St. Mark's Church) the lion. So that was all fine. But the only generally recognized symbol for St. Matthew which goes into that was a winged man, so I did have a man there. And then in the Tree of Jesse, I couldn't resist the reclining man with the Tree of Jesse growing out of Jesse. [Laughter] Just those two places, and all the rest of the eighty-eight panels—well, when I say eighty-eight, there were three areas which are vertical with two sets of four panels right together, involving one theme. For instance, in the Tree of Jesse eight panels are involved, and I used the metal between the panels for the trunk of the tree. And in the Creation there was another area like that, involving eight panels. The third
such area is the Last Supper, the Eucharist. But seventy of
the eighty-eight panels were approximately the same size,
which was approximately 24" x 28", but then the other eighteen
are odd sizes.

On the second floor, which I did later, my sister-in-law
was invaluable to me, as always, Dorothy Cravath, in advising.
She thought up the wonderful idea of just having light drawings
against the dark blue background, so it's sort of like blue-
print, because they couldn't be seen up close. The ones on
the ground level you can go right up to and touch them. They
are varied colors and they're more involved mosaics. But
they're rather effective.

How long did it take you to do all those?

Well, the first group, the first floor, we started, I believe,
actually--well, of course, I designed them all and then I made
one sample, which is hanging in my studio here now, of the
pelican and the young to show what they'd be. Besides that I
made cartoon-sized drawings; I mean, just cartoons that we
made them from. But the little color indications, as I call
them, and all that had to be accepted by the committee.

Well, unfortunately, the clergyman who was in charge
when I started this died before it was completed. He was
Walter Williams and he was very enthused about this idea, and
I remember his saying to me when we were discussing the subject,
"You know, you're more liturgically sound than you realize," and
I thought, "Well, that's true. I didn't realize that I was
liturgically sound!" [Laughter] So, he was quite pleased with
the idea, and they always regretted that they didn't take the
pelican to the hospital--he was in the hospital--for him to see
that one panel. Of course, they would have had they known that
he wasn't going to survive.

So the building is a memorial to him, the Williams Memorial,
which pleased me very much because he was so supportive and
enthusiastic in the planning stages.

It took quite a bit of time to get the color indications
and the cartoons, which were just line drawings--I'm not like
my sister-in-law who made meticulous cartoons, you know--approved.
But we started actually making them in July, 1962, and the whole
ground floor was complete, which was--let's see--I think almost
Cravath: forty panels, or more than half of the whole thing, by Christmas time, December. And then there was a lot of hesitation about getting funds together for the others and so it was a long delay before I did another group. You know how it is, paying for things. So my file has 1964 as the last year that I was negotiating. The project didn't take all the time, but it took some time from '61 to '64.

Teiser: Who was the architect?

Cravath: Joe McCarthy. And Joe McCarthy died too before I got the final payment. Isn't that curious? Both the rector of the church and the architect died before it was complete. But Joe did see the first floor. I mean, he was there at the party that first Christmas. Ruth Colby gave a supper party and a preview for my class.

Teiser: When did you do the mosaics at the Good Samaritan Church here?

Cravath: Oh, I made the cartoons for that, and the people did them. That was in 1961.

Teiser: How did that happen?

Cravath: Well, that happened because there were two peculiar areas of just dirt. There was a cement walk and there was a big semi-circle that was just nothing, just dirt and trash, and then there was a strip between the cement walk and something else. There was nothing there. So I suggested that the parishioners, the people themselves, make pebble mosaics to fill those areas, and I designed them and the people made them.

Teiser: Is this your church?

Cravath: Yes, that's where I go. That was a project. During Lent of 1961 we made those, and twenty-two different members of the parish worked on them.

Harroun: Under your direction?

Cravath: Well, yes. I was there and figured out the procedures and they mixed the cement and we put the pebbles, you know, into the cement and made them directly in place. We worked on them every weekend or Saturday for that six weeks of Lent. It was very simple because the negative spaces were just cement and just the
Cravath: design in pebbles, the style of my little strip down here in the garden, you know. That's the same idea. I don't think Dorothy approved of that procedure. [Chuckle]

They're kind of fun. That's all sorts of symbolism too, and I forget so much of it. The long strip is symbols of the twelve apostles, so twelve different members of the parish did those, which was a satisfaction. They could do that. Then the semi-circular area has four circles of the four evangelists and a symbol of the Trinity in the center, and then a border around that of fish, which I said were all the little Christians [chuckle], each one. So the people who didn't get involved in a panel would at least do a fish. Everybody did something. There was a fish for everybody to do.

Teiser: What was your next major liturgical work, then, after that?

Cravath: In the '60s?

Teiser: Yes. Well, whenever.

Cravath: Well, frankly, I think my liturgical work began to dwindle about that time. Oh, no. The only other major one, really, I think, and it's awfully interesting because it's sort of an introduction to what I'm doing now, is the crucifix for Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Jose. That was in 1968. I don't know if there's anything in my scrapbook about that or not.

Teiser: Tell about it.

Cravath: Well, there was a Franciscan priest down there, Father Anthony Soto. He came to see me and he had very simple, contemporary taste, so he wasn't so crazy about a corpus and crucifix, but his Mexican parish wanted a crucifix with a corpus, the real thing. So we discussed various ideas and I think he didn't want one too conspicuous and he liked very much the one that Dorothy and I had done for St. Peter's in Redwood City. But I'm not an expert woodcarver and it would have been more expensive in wood and they couldn't afford that. And I also was getting interested in working in wax, which I hadn't done yet, directly for bronze, you see; I mean, having them cast directly, the lost wax method.
Cravath: So I suggested that I make a high relief in bronze and that that be inserted in a cross that the people there would make. One thing I liked about that church was that it was practically built by the parishioners. They had one or two men who were very good cabinet makers and in woodwork, and they made the furniture. I mean, they really were enthused and Father Soto encouraged them and it was a nice group project.

So one of the men made a cross--this was decided, and the dimensions--that my bronze was to be superimposed on, but the cross was wide enough to accommodate the whole thing, so it didn't stand out too much, but there it was.

Well, so I took the bronze corpus down there and he'd made the cross. He made a beautiful cross. Apparently the priest and the other people liked the bronze so much that they wanted to feature that more and they had a smaller cross made. They didn't choose this beautiful cross that this fellow made. I haven't seen it on its present cross. Well, I did see it before it went up and it looked all right on the smaller cross. It hung over the cross a little bit, a more traditional effect, and featuring the corpus more.

Teiser: How large was your corpus?

Cravath: I don't remember the exact dimensions. But the figure, you mean, the corpus, was, I think, 4' x 3'.

Teiser: And you say you made it in wax?

Cravath: Well, I made it in wax directly and Franco Vianello, who was then in Richmond, Art Bronzes, cast it. He did a nice job and a nice patina, and everybody seemed to be happy about it.

Teiser: Do you have to do finishing work when they do that?

Cravath: No, you don't have to. They'll finish it. Some people will. I mean, that's whatever you want.

Teiser: Did you?

Cravath: No, no, because I hadn't worked in metal much. No, I selected the patina I wanted and he did that and that was satisfactory.

Teiser: The patina gets cast right into it?
Cravath: No, it's a chemical treatment afterwards. They get brown or greenish or different colors according to the--

Teiser: They don't let nature do it.

Cravath: Well, nature takes quite a while to do it. [Laughter] Nature takes a long time to do what they can do in twelve hours or something like that.

Teiser: So, that takes us to the end of your liturgical work?

Cravath: I think it does. I did a couple of little holy water fonts for a church in San Jose that Louisa Jenkins had done some windows for, but I've never seen them in place. She got me into this. They were carved out of travertine, little holy water fonts for the church, and I don't know whether they've ever installed them or not. They're very simple.

The Madonna del Rebozo, did we talk about that, when I did it? That was after my first trip to Mexico in 1954, so we discussed that in another one.

Teiser: Yes.*

THE HUTCHISON AND BOLLES PORTRAITS

Cravath: Then another thing of the '60s, 1968, is the portrait of Doctor [Claude B.] Hutchison, who was the mayor of Berkeley. Do you want to discuss that now?

Teiser: Yes, let's go on to that.

Cravath: That comes next on your list. He was the dean of the School of Agriculture at Davis for forty years, and a charming gentleman. When I did his portrait he was eighty-two years old, and he came over and sat once a week in the studio. I really enjoyed doing it and he was just a darling person. His wife was considerably younger; she was his second wife. She is an English woman. She would bring him over. I found out later she was giving this to the University of California at Davis.

*See pp. 179-180.
They have a beautiful building there called Hutchison Hall, named for him, and they also have a drive, Hutchison Drive; he was a very important person in building up Davis.* As I told you, he was subsequently, after he retired, mayor of Berkeley for a couple of years.

Do you want to hear the story about that portrait?

Teiser & : Yes.
Harroun

That was stolen! So, you see, I belong to the class of having works of art stolen.

Well, it was made and it was installed (my fault!) outside, because I thought it was a wonderful place. We picked this place outside of Hutchison Hall, and they took the bricks up and made a special base, and Vermont Marble made the pedestal for it, and we had an expert carve the letters on it. It was a nice place and I think it looked fine there.

When I came home from Mexico in 1969, which I guess was a year later, or not a year later, I had a telephone call from Davis and this female voice said, did I remember doing a bust of Hutchison for there. Can you imagine! Did I remember! And I said I certainly did remember. [Chuckle] "Well," she said, "You know it's been stolen." I said, "What?!" I was just flabbergasted. "Yes, and incidentally, the pedestal was taken too," she said. How they got it out, because it was cemented and bolted and goodness knows what...! I said, "Was it just the head?" She said, "Well, the whole thing, the pedestal and the thing disappeared." I was just absolutely flabbergasted.

So they wanted to have another one made. Would that be possible? You see, the University felt a sort of responsibility. Well, fortunately, it was possible because I had not made that in wax; I had modeled it in clay and cast it in hydrocal. I had given the hydrocal cast to the Hutchisons. They had it in Berkeley. At first Mrs. Hutchison thought they wouldn't want it, but then they did and they loved having it. We had a bronze patina put on, and they had it in their home.

*See also Claude B. Hutchison, The College of Agriculture, University of California, 1962, a Regional Oral History Office interview.
Cravath: So I said, well, I hoped they'd informed the Hutchisons. They would have to know about it right away because they had this thing from which it was reproduced. Well, time went by. I called the Hutchisons and do you know that the University didn't have the decency to inform the Hutchisons about this. A relative of theirs discovered that it was missing just before he went up and had lunch. Well, he had lunch with the dean up there. He was there in person and they didn't tell him. I just can't understand such rudeness officially. I think his wife said if this relative of hers hadn't gone over to see it and found it was missing that he wouldn't have known. And he would have walked over there to see it and it would have been gone. Nobody in the University had told him officially that it was missing.

Anyway, we had another one made and they found the pedestal. The University architect, of course, was charming. He'd been right along. And I went up to see it. I went up with Mrs. Hutchison to pick a new location for it. They decided the new one had to be placed inside, so they had the pedestal all restored and polished and so forth. It's now installed inside the building, in the hall, and in a place where it has a very good light. I approve of it. But I doubt that it's been stolen again from there.

Of course, my theory is that somebody in the art department stole it and melted it down for the bronze. Otherwise what happened to it? And they were so funny about it, the University. It seems that it had been gone some time before anybody--I mean, the public relations man and everybody rolled out the red carpet when we went up to see about it afterwards, but it was very strange. I never could understand it.

Teiser: They found the pedestal nearby?

Cravath: Out somewhere, dumped out there. It's a very, very strange thing. Quite a story, I think.

Teiser: What else in the '60s, then?

Cravath: Let's see. The great part of the '60s, as you gather, was taken with those mosaics.

[Pauses] Oh, yes. The late '60s, '67, before this, I got involved with restoring Starr King for the first time and that took quite a bit of time for several months.
Cravath: Let's see. Oh, in '67 there was a religious art show at Grace Cathedral and I worked on that.

Teiser: Do I remember that you did a head of--was it Bolles?

Cravath: Oh, yes! That was in the late '60s--Tom Bolles, I think--because that was in the Art Commission show in 1970. Yes, and that took a long time, in marble.

Teiser: It was a head?

Cravath: A portrait head of Tommy Bolles. Yes, that was one of the important things I did there time-wise because it was cut direct in Tennessee marble. That was in the mid-'60s, I guess.

Teiser: He was the child of--?

Cravath: John Bolles, the architect of Candlestick Park and Hanna Center, and also a good friend of mine.

Teiser: Did you do heads of him and his wife too at some point?

Cravath: Well, I did a portrait head of Mary Bolles in the '40s, I guess, or the '50s. But I also carved--they're right down here in the stoneyard now--their tombstones with their portraits. That belongs to the '70s, I guess. They're still here.* Isn't it funny how you forget things, because Tommy Bolles was one of the jobs in the '60s that I spent the most hours on, shall we say, besides the St. Dominic.

Teiser: [Reading from outline.] "City Art Commission Gallery, 1970." Was that the opening of the City Art Commission's gallery, the one they now call Capricorn Asunder?

Cravath: No, this was not at the Capricorn Asunder. This was in their office, which was right before this gallery was opened. They decided to have exhibits in the place where the Art Commission met, and it's the room next door to the Capricorn Asunder. The Capricorn Asunder area was then a garage and a big storage space, and they made the gallery out of it. So, that show--I think is was the first show they had there--led up to the development of Capricorn Asunder.

*See p. 268.
Teiser: What did you exhibit in there?

Cravath: I exhibited the head of Tommy Bolles in marble. And also the Madonna del Rebozo. Those two things.

Teiser: But you didn't exhibit any small figures in it?

Cravath: No, I was just starting to do them.

WORKS IN WAX AND BRONZE

Teiser: Does your work in wax, working with the small figures--?

Cravath: The '68 crucifix (which is later than Tommy Bolles) for San Jose's Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is what started me working in wax, and it was about 1969 or '70 that I started going to Charlie Farr's studio for this group that works once a week. It's Monday mornings now and we have a model from nine to twelve. Most of the people draw, but I have been making these figures from life in wax. We have the same pose for two weeks, so it gives me five and a half hours to work on these sketches, you know, one in that much time.

Teiser: Directly in wax?

Cravath: Directly in wax, yes, and that's what constituted my show at the Bolles Gallery in '72. It was a two-man show. Dorr Bothwell showed paintings and I showed sculpture. The title was "Sketches in Wax and Bronze." That was the title of my part of the show. I call them sketches.

Teiser: Were some of them cast in bronze?

Cravath: Yes. That's why I said "Wax and Bronze." Some of them were in bronze. Oh, and I had two portrait heads. One was the one that I had done of my grandson, Stuart Wakefield, which is in bronze. That was a very nice job of casting that Franco Vianello did. And then there was a head in hydrocal of one of my black neighbors, Jeffrey, whom I met restoring the Starr King the first time, in '67.

Teiser: He was a child?
Cravath: Yes, he was a child, about twelve or fourteen, and he sort of symbolized black dignity to me. He was very, very handsome and very dignified and quite beautiful, Jeffrey. He was a faithful model. I guess he was impressed with being able to earn money by sitting still.

Teiser: [Laughter] Did you ever see him again?

Cravath: Yes, I saw him some time after that. He would do yard work for me and sweeping. Unfortunately, I don't know what happened in the end to Jeffrey. I think he got into bad company and he left my life rather abruptly and unhappily, as far as I'm concerned, and I have never seen him since. I don't know what's happened to him. But I had known him for three or four years. So, I felt very sad about the end of that relationship.

Teiser: To go back to your small figures, what size are they?

Cravath: Well, some of the standing figures are twelve or thirteen inches. I guess fourteen inches is probably the largest.

Teiser: In them, do you work in any different style than you would in any other material?

Cravath: Yes. The material dictates the style quite a bit. I mean, it's very different from my stone carving.

Teiser: Can you characterize it?

Cravath: Well, it's very sticky stuff to work in, you know, and as Dorothy, my sister-in-law, used to say, they're sketches. Well, you've seen them.

Teiser: Yes, but I want you to tell so we can get it on tape.

Cravath: They're rough sketches, you might say, from life. The thing that interests me most is the life and the gesture and the vitality in the figures, and I don't use a great deal of detail.

Teiser: There's more implied motion?

Cravath: Right, I think so, much more so than there is in stone carving. I mean, the medium dictates somewhat the character of the work, considerably. But people seem to like them. I've sold a lot of them.
Harroun: What would be the difference between those and this [pointing to a small figure]?

Cravath: Now, this little figure was done in 1935.

Teiser: That's a figure of a child.

Harroun: That's Sammy [Sam Bell Wakefield IV], isn't it?

Cravath: It's my son, from memory, yes. A piece mold was made. I made the original of this in plasticine. It was modeled, you see. It's a different thing. It was not made in wax; it was modeled of plasticine. I had a piece mold made by an expert because it's a rather intricate thing, and I've had a number of reproductions in terra cotta. I've sold quite a few of them and made one for each grandparent, and Sam has one and Beth has one.

So after I got started working in bronze, I had one cast in wax, and this, you see, is the bronze from that. But this was not made directly in the wax, but it was cast in bronze from that same mold, the same mold that the others have been cast from.

Teiser: But that's not the kind of figure you would do in wax if you were working in wax?

Cravath: Not the kind I would. Some people would who like to do detailed meticulous work. Also, I did this when my eyesight was better. That's something, you know--years ago. Eyesight and detail tend to go together. [Laughter]

Teiser: And you're continuing to do this modeling?

Cravath: Yes, I'm producing them all the time. I had this show at the Bolles Gallery, in which there were--including the two portrait heads, which were not little--it must have been, I think, twenty figures. I sold two in wax.

There are waxes of Degas' in the Boston Museum. I mean, wax is, I think, a valid material. I mean, it can't be overheated, but terra cotta is breakable, and marble. I mean, most any artistic medium is perishable. But mostly people want to have them in bronze, you see, and of course bronze is the most durable of all. So, with two exceptions, the ones that were sold were in bronze. Some of them had been ordered before.
Cravath: There were several in bronze in the show that were sold, and I still have two from that show that are in bronze.

Teiser: But all the rest have been sold?

Cravath: No, the waxes haven't all been sold.

Teiser: You keep making figures in wax; do you keep having them cast too?

Cravath: Well, occasionally, if I can afford it. It's rather expensive, you see. A standing figure is not very durable in wax and subsequently I've had another standing figure cast in bronze.

Teiser: No, but--

Cravath: Oh, Mendocino comes after St. Francis. Have we discussed that? Candlestick Park?

Teiser: No.

ST. FRANCIS

Teiser: John Bolles, the architect of Candlestick Park decided you should do that?

Cravath: Yes! That I should make the St. Francis, because it was San Francisco; you know, the patron saint of San Francisco. I designed it as a small figure, which was originally half an inch to the foot, or something like that, and then John Bolles thought it should be larger, so now it's, I believe, three-eights of an inch to the foot, the size of my little model. Then I made a drawing. Well, before he had enlarged it, I made drawings of the size, I think, of an inch to the foot. I made a lot of drawings. The model was eventually, after quite a bit of time spent, accepted by the city. It had to be. This was some time later.
Cravath: He had this idea when Harney* was living, you see, and he sort of wanted to give Harney credit for having St. Francis out there. But it didn't take place in Harney's days. We really got down to the city and so forth about 1970, I guess. I think that's when the Art Commission accepted the design of the model, you see, and the architect's office had made the plan of where it would be and I took the model down to the Art Commission and it was accepted. Williams and Burroughs were then the contractors for Candlestick Park, phase number two, as they call it, when they completed the bowl and enlarged it. This was part of that project. This and Lee Kelly's gates are two works of art out there, and they were accepted by the Art Commission at the same time.

Then Williams and Burroughs made a model the size of my drawings, which was an inch to the foot, a fairly good-sized model, and I made corrections on that; I mean, slight modifications and corrections and, you know, fussed with it. So finally, when I gave the okay to their model, they went ahead and engineered it.

It was a very interesting project, interesting for them, because the man there said, "You know, we don't have things like this to do very often," and he was rather proud of it. They built the forms.

Teiser: Can you describe the material and the way it was made?

Cravath: Yes. They built this huge form. When I first went out there, I saw part of it lying on the ground; they put re-inforcing in that, you see, so it was on the ground. Then they put it together. I didn't see the actual construction. And they poured it in several phases, you know, poured the concrete into the forms.

Teiser: The figure is concrete and glass?

Cravath: Yes. The glass part isn't real. It's plexiglas, stronger than glass, you see, because they didn't dare have glass. The windows were put in afterwards, after the thing was poured.

Teiser: This was one figure you didn't have to execute.

*Charles P. Harney, the head of the contracting firm that constructed Candlestick Park.
Cravath: No! [Laughter] That's right! I didn't. It was poured and standing, and all the forms were stripped off of it January 1, 1972, was it? Yes, '72.

Anyway, I went out to work in the middle of January and I was prepared to work several weeks and I had Spero Anargyros for my helper. And it was finally decided, since John Bolles liked it so much just the way it was with the forms, that I didn't have to do any toothing if I didn't want to, and Dorothy liked it the way it was and didn't think toothing was necessary. But I felt that it would make it more interesting. I thought that the Wolf of Gubbio, that area, could be tooled, exposing the aggregate, and certain other areas too. I think it was very wise. I mean, I improved it.

Teiser: It is concrete with a good deal of aggregate in it?

Cravath: Yes. I chose the aggregate because we intended all the time that I would be toothing it, which would expose the aggregate and the colors. It was a pleasant color, I think, of aggregate. If you've seen it, you'll see that certain areas are smooth, the surface. There's the cement on the surface and then in certain areas you see the aggregate, which is a different color, and all the parts where you see the aggregate we tooled.

They engaged compressors and I had to wear a hard hat. I got a very firm letter from Williams and Burroughs or somebody saying that if I or my helper didn't wear a hard hat, they'd be subject to a thousand dollar fine and so forth, so we wore hard hats.

Teiser: How tall is the figure?

Cravath: Twenty-seven feet.

Teiser: So you worked on scaffolds?

Cravath: Yes, I spent one day. Most of the toothing was done around the base and the place where the Wolf of Gubbio was. We didn't have to climb on a scaffold for that. But right up in the center around the cross I also wanted to toole it, so I spent one day on the scaffold tooing that area. But we worked five days on it and that was it. We tooled what we thought had to be done, and so it was one week's work, but it was very interesting.
Teiser: Was the plexiglas in by then?

Cravath: Oh, no. No, no, no. The tooling had to be done first, and then it was while I was out there that they came by with the different samples and we selected the plexiglas. So it was some time before that was installed.

Then there was the struggle for the halo, you see. That was part of the design.

Teiser: The halo was an original part of the design?

Cravath: It was an original part of the design, the design that had been accepted by the Art Commission and the architect and so forth. However, if I had been willing to relinquish the halo, I think—well, the Art Commission said it was up to the artist, if I insisted on it, it had to be, you see. I didn't want the final payment till it was up, so there was a lot of delay. And that nice girl on the San Francisco Examiner did that first article about the halo, and then there was another article after.

Teiser: Well, Ruth, who brought up the objection to the halo?

Cravath: There was some slip in the contract, I think, with Williams and Burroughs. Everything else was included, and I don't know whether they didn't figure on this or didn't want it. But there's a man out there with—what's it called? The Giants, Incorporated? Candlestick Park? Anyway, he didn't think it was necessary. It might have saved them some money and I don't know what just exactly—

Teiser: It wasn't on religious grounds that they decided that it wasn't necessary?

Cravath: Oh, no. No, no. They might have tried to use that for an argument, but it wasn't that. The rest of it was complete and this was just something—but I was pretty stubborn about it and subsequently have been very glad because people said, "You were right," and the Art Commission was behind me one hundred per cent.

The metal frame for the halo was made right down here at the foot of the hill. I went down and met them several times, and I did a lot of running around about it. I was out there the day that they installed it. It was fine.
Teiser: As I remember there was a sports writer who took serious exception to the statue.

Cravath: Oh, yes! Did you read his article?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: Yes, that was really something! I remember one friend of mine who reads papers was sparing me that, but somebody else—thank God!—gave it to me, because I was really glad to see it. And Blanche Phillips Howard, my neighbor across the street who's a sculptor, wrote a wonderful letter to the editor about how he took advantage of the fact that the sports writer wrote about something of which he knew nothing, art, and so forth. It was a good letter she wrote, but they didn't publish it. But she at least expressed herself, and the opinions of a few of the rest of us. You know, taking advantage of having this space!

Well, it was obvious; it was in the paper, I think, Monday, and he'd had a heavy weekend or something and he had to have an article and he picked this up and saw the picture in the paper, you see, and he got mad and it gave him something to write about.

So he certainly went to town. His whole column—I think a little of it was about something else, but seven-eights of it was ranting about how Miss Cravath should give the money back to the city and, you know...

Teiser: There weren't other critics?

Cravath: Well, they didn't express themselves. At least their expressions didn't come to my ears. Probably there have been. I've had many compliments about it.

My one incomplete business is I think that there should be a picture postal card, as there is of Vaillancourt Fountain. There's a picture postal card of that available, and I wrote John Bolles a note on it and I said, "I think St. Francis would make a more attractive postal card than this." John said he's going to do something about it, and it hasn't happened yet, but I hope it does because I think it would be suitable for St. Francis. I must get after John about that.

Teiser: There was some trouble about the plaque?
Cravath: Oh, that was criticized. Well, I feel a slight guilt about it, because there had been so much vandalism that they were afraid that if it was down low that it would be stolen or something, and Peter Bolles or somebody in John's office, figured out a place up high, underneath the sleeve, where they put it. It isn't a very attractive plaque and it hasn't weathered very well. All our names are there. I guess that's all right. The last time I saw it, it was still there. The Art Commission objected to it and I can see why; it wasn't very handsome really. But I didn't disapprove.

Teiser: Did you sign the figure anywhere?

Cravath: No, I don't think it's signed, but my name is on the plaque as sculptor.

Teiser: Do you often sign your figures?

Cravath: Well, I try to remember it now because one should sign. My dear sister-in-law didn't sign her work, and it's very bad for artists not to because the value is more if they're signed after they're gone. Now I try to sign and put the date on because you can't remember when you do things. I did sign Starr King down there, and the date's on it.

Teiser: So, you do that much lettering?

Cravath: Yes, I do that much lettering [chuckle] myself.

Teiser: You were speaking just now of the IBM figures.

Cravath: We're back to the IBM. Catherine asked me. Yes, I had more involvement in the execution of them than I did with the St. Francis because that was done entirely by the contractors, Williams and Burroughs, and I was very pleased with what they did. Now, I have something to say about that. Which shall we say first? Shall we go back to IBM?

Teiser: Yes, go back to the IBM since it relates here.

Cravath: Yes. I made the full-sized drawings of those in the studio and hired Spero Anargyros to build the forms, which he did right there, you see, in the studio, using corrugated iron for parts and plywood and so forth. He built the forms in the stoneyard. We figured it out. And the concrete was
Cravath: delivered into them right there in my stoneyard and studio and we stripped them there and they were straightened up one by one and I did tooling of certain surfaces. So I was much more involved in the construction of those because that was part of my job, you see, to build them.

[Interruption]

The only things I've done in this concrete and stained glass business are the three things for IBM and the one downstairs here and the St. Francis.

Teiser: So, back to the St. Francis.

Cravath: Back now. After we had tooled it, then the glass was installed, you see, by a glazier's there. That was also part of the contract. I didn't have to actually do that. Then it stayed that way for a long time while we struggled for the halo, you see. I think it was nearly a year later when the halo went up.

Then, all of a sudden, a year ago last August, I think, I had just come back from Montana when John Bolles called and said, "Well, we've got the mayor and everybody all lined up. They're going to dedicate that next Sunday." I was supposed to come out to brunch in the Giants' Club. They had a very fine brunch about eleven-thirty and the mayor* was there. Then we all paraded out and Father Floyd, the darling Franciscan priest, made a speech--did I put his speech in the scrapbook? I should have.

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: And he dedicated it to the people of San Francisco and the Giants. It was very amusing because as the mayor and I were walking out--you know, he's very speedy--there was one man who came up to him and spoke to him; he said, "I didn't used to like you, but I do now." And the mayor said to me, "Maybe he was right the first time." [Laughter] It was an aside to me. Anyway--

*Joseph Alioto
THE BOLLES TOMBSTONES AND THE BURKE MEMORIAL

Teiser: Now where do the Bolles tombstones fit in chronologically?

Cravath: I think I had almost finished them at the time of the dedication of the St. Francis, so the tombstones belong to the early '70s.

Teiser: Is that unusual for people to have their tombstones done?

Cravath: I think so. You go in some cemeteries and you see little tiny things with photographs of the deceased. And I suppose some of the early Romans had their portraits carved on their tombstones. I think they did.

Well, John Bolles owns a little cemetery up the coast and it's an Early American style cemetery, you see, and all the tombstones are of that style. So, when Dondero closed up their shop down here on Third Street, he ordered these two tombstones.

Teiser: Dondero Marble Company.

Cravath: The idea was--Mary Bolles was in my class, you see, and she was going to carve them. This was a project for her. Then he decided, John, that they should have their portraits on them, and Mary said no, I had to do the portraits. I said, "Oh, you can do them, Mary." No, they insisted I do the portraits. And Mary is now involved; she just started to do some leaves. She was going to do leaves around them, you know, some little decoration, and John had to design the lettering, whatever he wanted.

It's very miserable marble to carve, and I didn't have an opportunity to refuse to do it because they didn't send up a sample for us to try. It's pretty marble, but it's very difficult to carve and it chips and it's not too good. So I said they've got to have some expert hand letterer. I mean, I've done a little lettering. I did the lettering on the--oh, I know, something we didn't talk about--the Burke Memorial. That came in the '60s, in '68.

Teiser: Good. Let's finish the tombstones and go back to the Burke Memorial.

Cravath: Okay. So, I have finished the portraits and Mary is now working on hers and they're still here in the stoneyard. So that's the story of them.
Teiser: What was the Burke Memorial?

Cravath: Well, it's Katherine Burke's School. I don't know why we missed that. She died in 1967, and in '68 or '69--it's the late '60s--they wanted to give a memorial to her. She's the niece of Katherine Burke that started the school, you see.

Barbara Burke and Katherine Burke were the nieces who carried on. She had been connected with the grammar school for years.

So I did the three panels which are outside there. I thought it would be nice to have a portrait of her. I thought that would be a logical thing. So there's a figure of her with a grammar school child. They loaned me a uniform to do it. So that's the center panel. On the left-hand side is her pet dog. She loved this poodle, apparently, very much. And underneath that we have, "To Remember Katherine Burke," such and such dates, her birth and death dates. I did that lettering in the polished Tennessee marble. (I don't mind doing a little bit like that.)

Then on the right panel are quails, and that seems to be everybody's favorite because there were quails out there near where the school is, out on 35th Avenue. Jay Risling took photographs of them for me.

But the thing is that I wasn't able to get any profile photographs of Katherine Burke, which surprised me. I thought it would be a simple thing to do. So I had to sort of reconstruct her face, and I don't suppose it looks like her. A couple of women who knew her went to the school, and they said it looked a little bit like her. One thing that I did get like her's was her hairdo because I found that Dorothy Philgate Walker, who does my hair, used to do Katherine Burke's hair, so I took my cartoon out and Dorothy corrected it. That is correct, the hairdo, because she had me do a little bit here and a little bit there; under Dorothy's direction I got the hair right. But as far as the features are concerned, none of the family turned up anything. So I don't worry about whether it's a likeness or not. It's fairly good-sized. [Gestures]

Teiser: How big?

Cravath: I think about forty inches. I know the two side ones were eighteen inches wide and higher, and the center one was--well, you can see the pictures. I'm not very good on remembering
Harroun: Had you met Zacha before?

Cravath: Yes, I had met him before, and I had been up there.

Teiser: Tell who Bill Zacha is.

Cravath: Well, he is a remarkable person who has just transformed the town of Mendocino. He's built the Art Center up entirely, and the theatre. He's quite a wonderful developer. He is an artist himself. He does watercolors and silkscreens. This gallery that he has on the main street there is very dear to his heart.

Teiser: Does he organize the workshops too?

Cravath: Well, he organizes them. I mean, he gets the people, yes. He's the director of the Art Center and I think that's sort of a volunteer job on his part. I mean, he's really been very generous to the community.

Teiser: Have you seen Mendocino change over the years?

Cravath: Oh, yes! Well, I started visiting up there after this art development was started. But Dorr Bothwell went up there in 1961, and Bill Zacha had started to build the Art Center and started to make that development. The first time I visited the town as an overnight guest--I remember just driving through years ago before it was discovered as an art colony possibility--was the summer Dorr was teaching there. She came down in the middle of her summer course with the big announcement that she was moving to Mendocino and Bill Zacha was building a studio for her, which he did, this magnificent studio that she still has. He owned the building, but he subsequently sold it, but she's still there. I mean, she still has the studio.

The Art Center is a big place now. Emmy Lou Packard and Byron Randall were there. They, I think, were early comers there.

Teiser: Before Zacha?

Cravath: Yes, before Zacha, or about the same time. They had this place on the main street and a gallery, and they sold things, and they were there for years.
Cravath: dimensions. I just remember because of my spaces. They're installed on the exterior in the school's court there.

Teiser: What material are they in?

Cravath: They are in a chocolate Tennessee marble.

MENDOCINO

Teiser: That brings us up to Mendocino.

Cravath: Yes, and that's pretty near the present. Well, in the fall of '73 I had an exhibition at Zacha's Bay Window Gallery, and I don't know whether there was a catalogue of that in my scrapbook.

Teiser: No.

Cravath: Well, it was an exhibit of, again, Sketches in Bronze and Wax, and I was co-exhibitor with Sara Long. She did such charming stitchery. Those were things that hung on the wall, so it was a good combination for an exhibition.

Bill Zacha had a wonderful time installing that show. He got an old telephone pole and sawed it in pieces for pedestals, and I have a lot of photographs he took. They're not good. The light is wrong or something and it's unfortunate. But it made a very interesting arrangement because he had pedestals of different sizes for these little figures, which were sections of an old telephone pole.

Teiser: These are all the small figures?

Cravath: Right. They're all the small figures.

That exhibit opened on Saturday, and the following Monday a class started; I taught there for a week in the fall of '73. Does it say there anything about the teaching, or just the exhibit?

Harroun: [Reading from announcement.] "...will conduct a workshop."

Cravath: A workshop was what they called it, yes.
Cravath: I just yesterday got a contract to sign from Zacha. He wants me to teach next summer. And he had asked when I was there--well, we haven't come to my second teaching period yet.

This first class was in the fall of 1973, and Bill Zacha was in the class and he really got turned on and he's made lots of bronze figures since and he's come down and had them cast. He just loves to do it and he's done very well. He's been working toward having an exhibition.

So he wanted me to come back again and I went up there this January for a week, just recently.

Harroun: Oh, you had another workshop?

Cravath: Yes. This was the second workshop. That's '75, isn't it? [Chuckle] My first project of '75. But I didn't have an exhibition at the time. However, he's kept my work ever since, as he does Dorr's, and he's sold a number of things since then. Everybody he sells them to wants to have them in bronze, so they come down and we have them put in bronze and so forth. But he has a number of things there now in wax.

He did have two figures in bronze, and I was asked to show in Palo Alto, at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, in December. I was asked to show six things. So I asked Hayward King, who organized the show, if things would be acceptable in wax and he said they would be. So I had three in bronze and three in wax, and I included the two Bill brought down, so I don't think he has any bronzes of mine up there now, but he has a number of waxes.

While I was there in January, Kai DuCasse was there; she was in my class. He asked Kai if she would teach a class--a workshop, as they call them--the last two weeks in August next summer, in three-dimensional stained glass, which she teaches at Lone Mountain. She was delighted and she agreed right away. Then he said he wanted me to come at the same time and give a workshop, which I thought was two weeks.

I said, "Well, I really feel I have to finish Starr King before I get too involved and I'd better think about it a little bit." So, I didn't say yes, and I said I'd like to do it. But he jumped to the conclusion and sent me a contract.*

* I taught from August 18 to 29. R.C.
Teiser: What sort of work does Kai DuCasse do herself, Ruth? What is her principal medium?

Cravath: Well, as she said to me—we were talking last night about it—we were trying to assemble a religious art show and they think of her as a painter. I had said, "Well, are you going to have your St. Francis that you've done here?" And she said, well, they thought of her as a painter. But I really think she's more of a sculptor than a painter, and she thinks so too, herself. Stackpole was very enthused about her sculpture. I think she's a natural sculptor.

METHODS OF TEACHING

Teiser: Ruth, when you teach in workshops or have classes here, do you do work yourself?

Cravath: On my own work?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: Oh, no! It's impossible! I couldn't. I mean, it's a totally--

Teiser: You don't show them how you do things?

Cravath: Well, the thing is that it's very difficult to teach without working on people's work, and some people love to have you and that's the easiest way of teaching. I do that if people want me to, but some people don't and some people do, and I try to be careful not to touch their work unless I say, "May I?" or "Do you want--?" "Oh, would you." If I know, if they convince me that they want me to work on their work or show them, I will, because that's so much easier than trying to give them an idea by talking, you see.

Teiser: But do you ever do a project with them so that they can see how you do it?

Cravath: No, no. I mean, what I feel I have to do in teaching is to teach them to see, and their personal technique, the surface, is an individual thing like handwriting, because they develop their surfaces. I mean, this I don't want to teach. I have a certain way of doing it, but that doesn't mean that they'd
Cravath: feel it that way. But the form or the life or the vitality of something, this I can--it's just teaching them to see, I think. You can't teach them how to interpret what they see; at least, in my theory, I can't. I mean, we're all limited in what we teach them anyway, in what we do.

But if I would demonstrate or something--because they look at my things and they say, "Oh, I wish I could do it like that," you know, "It looks just this way." Well, if they try to make it look like mine, it's a superficial thing, you know. It's the surface. So it doesn't mean anything.

Harroun: You have taught all your career, haven't you?

Cravath: I think I have. Maybe just a few recesses. But, you know, it's interesting, I still don't see how people--this I was discussing with this young girl from Lone Mountain last night who brought her tape recorder, incidentally. I thought about it when you asked if I worked on my work when I'm teaching. I can't think of my work and teach at the same time because you get too involved in the students' work. I've had very little experience of teaching full time. I taught the summer class at Lone Mountain in 1961 and I thought maybe I'd do some work in the afternoons. It was five days a week. And I don't see how artists teach full time and do any work because I didn't have any time left to do it.

I maybe would have done more of my own work if I hadn't been teaching over the years, but I've liked teaching. But I think at the most I would teach two days a week, you see, or three days when I went to the convent two days and taught short sessions at St. Rose. At least I always had some days completely to myself because I couldn't do the two together, and I don't see how artists can and I think many of them don't.

Teiser: I don't see how artists can support themselves without teaching either.

Cravath: No. They all do some teaching, but they don't give five days a week full time to it. I mean, they maybe teach twice a week if they teach in a college or something like that. So, you can work out a schedule of teaching two days a week, but you're in a different gear, that's all. But when people think that I can work on my work down here while I'm teaching--you either help that person or you work on your own. You don't want to be
Cravath: bothered with anybody else when you're working on your own. You just can't do two things at once; at least I can't.

I have let Ruth Kramer, who's my helper on Starr King, do work on something she was carving. I just didn't pay any attention to her then. But that's different, you see. You couldn't do it with a lot of people. She's very understanding and she was helping me on that, so it worked out, but it's not ordinarily possible.

Teiser: You will answer the phone when you're working if you hear it, will you, when you're in the stoneyard?

Cravath: Yes. Oh, heavens! This would bother me, you know. Because you think it might be something very important? No, no. I can't ignore the telephone, I'm sorry to say. But when I'm teaching, I try to have my students answer and they say I'm busy or they take a message or something. Then I forget to call back sometimes, but--[chuckle].

CURRENT WORK, 1975

Teiser: We should end this with what projects you have going forward now.

Cravath: [Laughter] It sounds very dull. The main thing I want to get off my chest, as it were, is to finish the restoration of Starr King, which is still standing under the tree in my stoneyard. It probably will be as long as I'm here, but the city will have to cope with it after I've gone, and I hope that they will have built the area up around the school so that he'll go back where he's supposed to be. But the principal who was at the time--I guess she's still the principal--made noises about how he ought to be down at the Unitarian Church, and if they decide to do that after, it's all right. But I think it ought to be here on the hill where it's supposed to be.

Teiser: But you're going to finish your work on it by a certain date?

Cravath: I have a three-year contract from the city, or the school board. The third year is up in about the middle of September.
Cravath: So, as soon as the weather is good—well, I have done more than two-thirds of it. As a matter of fact, it's through using epoxy that I've been able to restore it. I mix the stone dust and the stone chips with the epoxy and glue it together, and then this can be carved. I only have one more big gluing job. It's the head of the dove. The rest of it is there, and there is more carving to do, but the adding, affixing the pieces, is quite tricky, and one of my students is my great helper because it takes four hands to do it often, you know, to work this runny material. At least four hands it takes. She's very good. So we have just one more big piece to glue on and then all the rest of it will be just my carving, and I've done a great deal of the carving. So if we have nice weather and if I get to work, I can quite easily finish it by the middle of September.

Teiser: Meanwhile you're still making small figures.

Cravath: Oh, yes. I have a lot of them that I would like to do some more work on. I work every Monday on that, and when Starr King is finished I'll have time in the studio to carry some of them further. My sister-in-law was a great comfort to me because she always advised me against trying to finish them. She said, "They'd be nice, but they'd be something different if you really finished them up," because I don't like to do fine things, little things, tiny things. She loved to. She was so good at it.

Teiser: But she liked these just as you did them?

Cravath: She did. She encouraged me a great deal.

DOROTHY PUCCINELLI CRAVATH

Cravath: But speaking of Dorothy and her ability to do fine things and so forth, she was such an absolutely superb craftsman, as you know, and had absolute manual control of everything, just absolutely. For fifty years I have watched that woman, and I'm sure you have too, with a drink in her hand, twirling the glass like this [gestures] and the liquid would go up. For fifty years I held my breath and never did once a drop go over the glass. You remember how she always did that with a drink? Always! I mean, a glass of sherry or a glass of wine, or any
Cravath: glass, she would twirl the glass like this [gestures] and, of course, the liquid would move around and around and around. Oh! Sometimes I used to get a little nervous, but for the fifty years that I've known her, never did a drop go over the glass. That's a great example of her manual dexterity, her manual control. I wouldn't dare do that. It would spill right away! [Laughter]

Harroun: Incidentally, did she finish the hands she was working on?

Cravath: I think so. I think so, yes. They were exquisite. Edith has them. Two hands for this virgin, you know, this Spanish carving that Edie had. I don't know whether they've been installed. Well, she made the beautiful hands in wax and then she carved them in wood. They're just lovely.

Teiser: Edith Hamlin had bought a wood figure that lacked hands?

Cravath: No, no. It had badly made terribly awkward hands, you know, and part of the drapery was poorly restored. Dorothy took off the awful, badly restored hands and the badly restored drapery and I think she carved the wood for the drapery, or else it was in wax, but she did beautiful hands for it. I don't know whether Edith has had those attached to it yet or not, but at least she has the hands.
ARTISTS AND MURALS
(Dates of Interviews: March 20 and 22, 1974
Place: Dorothy Cravath's home in Berkeley, California)

Teiser: When we were talking a week or so ago, I asked why there was a mural tradition in the San Francisco area in the twenties and thirties. And you said...

D. Cravath: I said it was because of the WPA.

Teiser: There wasn't one before the WPA?

D. Cravath: There wasn't much before then. I think the only murals, that I can remember anyhow, were Arthur Mathews' murals for theater, the Mechanics' Institute and things like that. But nobody knew much about murals. Well, a few people did. Ray Boynton was trying to start some.

Harroun: Was he connected with the art school?

D. Cravath: He was for a while, I think. I don't quite remember. Not very long at any rate. But he was a local artist.

Teiser: He was later at Mills, wasn't he?

D. Cravath: He did a mural at Mills, in the auditorium. I'm not sure about this now, but I think it was later; I think he did that for the WPA too. But he was interested, and he had studied--I'm not sure whether he had studied in Italy or not--but there were very few people who knew anything about murals of any kind.

Harroun: Was there no reason for them to? Were there no walls to be decorated here?
D. Cravath: Oh, there were walls here but nobody was particularly forthcoming about buying local artists' work, anyhow, at that time. If they were going to have murals they would have gotten somebody from Europe to do them.

Teiser: This was prior to the Depression?

D. Cravath: Yes. Because those who did local art did it because they insisted on doing it; they did something else to make a living.

Harroun: But people like the Stanfords--for instance, Mrs. Leland Stanford--went to Europe for anything in the way of art.

Teiser: She was somewhat hitched to Europe, anyway.

D. Cravath: Well, everybody was; nobody local was considered any good, really. They were just sort of interesting...

Teiser: What was here to encourage artists?

D. Cravath: Very little was here to encourage artists except other artists. A few people patronized them somewhat. Like Albert Bender, who gave people a hundred dollars and said, "Here give me your best piece, and I'll put it in a permanent exhibit." Which I think was perfectly okay.

Teiser: Some people criticized him.

D. Cravath: I know. A lot of artists were mad...

Harroun: They were mad at that?

D. Cravath: Oh, yes. But they gave him their stuff because they needed the money. Like mad.

Teiser: You mean he'd pay a hundred dollars for something they thought was worth many times that?

D. Cravath: Oh, yes. Of course they didn't have to give him anything they thought was worth more, but it would be in a permanent exhibit so...

Teiser: He would give it to a museum or something of that sort?

D. Cravath: Yes, Mills, or to the San Francisco Museum and several other places.
Teiser: There was the Hopkins Art Institute...

D. Cravath: Oh yes, there was quite an art tradition here. But very little patronage. Some. It was a good place for artists always; well, because there were other interested and dedicated artists around. And they sort of got together.

Harroun: Artists who lived in the Montgomery Block--now when was that?

D. Cravath: Well, almost everybody had at one time a studio in the Montgomery Block.

Teiser: If artists couldn't make a living in San Francisco, why did it happen that they did make a living?

D. Cravath: They made a living at something else.

Teiser: But was it a city where they could find other things to do, more than other places? Or easier living? What made it possible to practice art in a bad economic situation?

D. Cravath: Easier living, better climate, and a certain, oh I guess, tolerance, or interest in art here. Which didn't extend as far as buying a lot of it. But there were places to exhibit, and there were people interested in it. And a few people interested even in buying. But I think, my memory of it is, that it was mostly because people liked to live here. Artists liked to live here. And it was a lot easier than living in the East, for instance.

Teiser: Did any of them teach people who really weren't artists?

D. Cravath: Yes, that was one of the things [they could do.]

Teiser: Were there people here to be taught who had a hobby interest in art?

D. Cravath: I don't really think that there was quite as much hobby interest then, not nearly as much as there is now. Everybody wants to be an artist now, but only the freaks like us wanted to be artists, and--

Teiser: There weren't so many big classes of just housewives, and Sunday painters?

D. Cravath: No.
Teiser: Whom did the artists teach then, each other?

D. Cravath: Well, they'd teach in school, and colleges. And some of them had private classes, and some of them taught children. Some of them worked in service stations, some of them worked as file clerks. Anything you could get you took to make your living, and then you painted in your spare time.

For instance, Dong Kingman; at the beginning of the WPA, he was a house-boy and a cook. He had studied art in China, but we knew him as a house-boy and a Sunday painter. He was working for somebody or other who liked the idea that he was an artist, appreciated it, but paid him for being a house-boy and a cook. And then on Saturdays and Sundays he would avidly try to do watercolors. And he wasn't awfully good because he didn't have much time. Then the WPA came along and they were looking equally avidly for somebody who could do watercolors, and, as a matter of fact, I gave them his name, and from then on he had a full-time occupation, you see. Gave up his job as house-boy and painted all the time. Became very good.

Teiser: I guess before the WPA there was Foster and Kleiser.

D. Cravath: Foster and Kleiser, yes. Maynard Dixon and a batch of other people worked for Foster and Kleiser.

Teiser: And that gave them a kind of art to do, didn't it?

D. Cravath: Yes, sure.

Harroun: Paid them, anyway.

D. Cravath: Paid them. Edith* told me the other day that Maynard hadn't worked at Foster and Kleiser for very long. I thought he had, but she said, no; he did illustrations mostly before that.

Harroun: He did illustrations for Sunset Magazine, for instance.

D. Cravath: And some back East.

Teiser: Were there other companies like the advertising agencies, billboard companies...

*Edith Hamlin Dixon, Maynard Dixon's widow.
D. Cravath: Yes. Oh, what was that one that I used to do things for? I can't remember, but there were several.

Teiser: There was Knight-Counihan.

D. Cravath: Knight-Counihan, that was it.

Teiser: What was it, a printing company?

D. Cravath: It was a printing company, but they employed commercial artists to do layouts and things like that. I did candy boxes and a few magazine covers [laughter]. Truman Bailey was their art director at one time. George Post worked for them at one time too, as a matter of fact.

Teiser: Were there advertising agencies that were a source of work for artists?

D. Cravath: I don't remember having anything to do with them.

[Antonio] Sotomayor worked at the Palace Hotel, as a matter of fact.

Teiser: What sort of things did he do besides party decorations?

D. Cravath: He did party decorations, and he did menus and he did posters, and he did anything in the way of decorations that came up.

Teiser: That would be what you'd probably call display work, wouldn't it, lettering, and...

D. Cravath: Yes, but he had a room upstairs, and they furnished him the room, which he used as a studio for his own work also, and they paid him for what he did there. I don't know whether he was on a salary or not; you could ask him. But he wasn't employed as anything but a commercial artist; except that then they suddenly discovered that he was more than a commercial artist and he did these murals.*

Harroun: Who discovered? The Palace, or...

D. Cravath: Well, as a matter of fact, this was when Helen [Forbes] and

*In the hotel's Happy Valley room and in the Palace Corner.
D. Cravath: I had just done the "Mama House" murals, and somebody or other--anyhow, Dorothy Truebright was the director for the Palace, and she and this man, whose name I can't at the moment remember--oh, Bruce Porter. He was very well-known, too. Anyhow, Bruce Porter and Dorothy Truebright thought that I would be great to do a mural at the Palace Hotel, so I did a nasty one [laughter] with very unconvincing Italian girls gathering rose petals and dumping them into an impossible urn for some reason or other. [Laughter]

Teiser: What was the occasion?

D. Cravath: Putting a mural over the music stand in the Rose Room.

Teiser: Oh, Rose Room.

D. Cravath: Roses, yes. Rose-gatherers. And the Rose Room was lit by changing lights that changed from magenta to blue to pink to green to yellow, to orange. And so I worked up there behind a screen in the Rose Room, trying to coordinate these idiot girls to these idiot lights, and it was quite something! [Laughter].

And then somebody--I think it was Bruce Porter--wanted to do some early San Francisco things. Murals. And I said, why don't you get Sotomayor, because I thought he'd be very good. And they said, oh, he's just a commercial artist. So I said, no indeed, and so they got him. And they were just delighted with his work. He was just right for doing that. He was a natural.

Teiser: He'd been employed there all the time?

D. Cravath: Yes.

Harroun: But they hadn't thought of him in this context?

D. Cravath: No, they just thought he was a good commercial artist.

Teiser: What you're saying keeps implying that there really isn't so much of a line between the ability to do commercial art, or very highly applied art, and fine art.

*The Fleishhacker Memorial Mothers' Building at the Fleishhacker Zoo, completed in 1938. See pp. 11-15.*
D. Cravath: Oh there is. Usually if a fine artist does very much commercial art, he's wrecked as a fine artist. It's an altogether different state of mind. But Sotomayor is a very versatile fellow; he can just turn his hand to this or that or the other, and it was no trouble for him to switch off to commercial art. He was trying to be a fine artist. He was a fine artist. But he couldn't make any money at it, so that's what he was doing. Giving him a studio and living and so on. I think he'd had some exhibits, I'm not sure, before that. It's just that they weren't aware of that.

WPA ART

Teiser: When the WPA came along, there was this reservoir of mural artists that was tappable?

D. Cravath: Of mural and other artists, I suppose. Nobody knew from nothing how to do murals.

Teiser: So how did they learn?

D. Cravath: Well, just about that time Diego Rivera came up and did some murals.

Teiser: Just by chance?


Harroun: She started that, didn't she?

D. Cravath: I think so. And, anyhow, he had an exhibit of some of his early stuff, which is beautiful, you know. The Mexican babies and the flowers and this that and the other. And everybody was quite excited about it. And then Bill Gerstle got him up to do a mural at the [San Francisco] Stock Exchange and one at the artists' guild. The Stock Exchange mural was off-limits to everybody but the stockbrokers, but the Art Association
D. Cravath: one, you know in that big room--* everybody who was faintly interested in art went there and watched him do it. I had never seen a mural in my life except in reproductions. Helen had. She'd been to Europe.

Teiser: Helen?

D. Cravath: Helen Forbes. And she was very interested in doing fresco. Showing other people how to do fresco. And she had done one or two little ones in Dr. Eloesser's office. Dr. Eloesser was one of the big art patrons because--I don't think he bought art, but he traded. He was the artists' physician. And in his files he had a lot of folders. And they had a little cryptic sign on the edge of these folders. On every artist's folder. Which meant, "Don't ever send this one a bill." [Laughter]

Teiser: That goes back to another way that artists could live. Did many artists trade art work for medical and dental bills?

D. Cravath: Oh yes, whenever they could.

Teiser: But could they often?

D. Cravath: Quite often. Doctors and dentists wanted paintings in their offices and so on.

Teiser: I remember George Post got his teeth straightened by Dr. Fred Wolfsohn and did a mural for him. [Laughter]

D. Cravath: I don't doubt it.

And all the artists, big and little, known and unknown, went to Dr. Eloesser. And had this little cryptic sign on their folder. [Laughter] And then, of course, they'd present him with something or other, and his offices were a gallery of practically every artist in town.

Teiser: I interrupted you when you were talking about the murals.

*In what was then called the California School of Fine Arts, now the San Francisco Art Institute. The Rivera mural there was painted in 1931, the gift of William Gerstle.
D. Cravath: Helen Forbes made a little thing—if you can call it a mural, it was so small. It was over the entrance door on the inside of Dr. Eloesser's office. Forget what it was, a cougar or something.

Teiser: In exchange for an appendix? [Laughter]

D. Cravath: I don't know whether that was an appendix or not. She had her appendix out later on by Dr. Eloesser. But he did quite a roaring business in artists.

Teiser: Did you ever see her working on that?

D. Cravath: I didn't see her work on that. Later on she built a house up on Telegraph Hill* and decorated it with flying ducks, and I helped her on that. She did that principally to see whether fresco would hold up in this atmosphere.

Teiser: It did, didn't it?

D. Cravath: Yes, it's still there. Just as good as new.

Teiser: Did you work on high scaffolds?

D. Cravath: This was not a very high scaffold. It was—there's a little porch, runway, gallery, whatever you call it, underneath it. I forget whether that was before or after we did the Mama House.

Then the WPA came along and everybody was looking for walls to put artists to work on. So everybody who could, who wanted to, became a mural artist overnight. [Laughter] And some were awfully good, and some were simply horrible.

Teiser: Did Rivera continue being an influence? Did he have a continuing contact with them at all?

D. Cravath: Later he came up. And then he came up for the Fair.** And he did that huge one at the Fair, you know.

Teiser: Which is now at the City College?

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*At the corner of Lower Alta and Montgomery Streets.

**Golden Gate International Exposition, 1939-40.
D. Cravath: Part of it's out there. But just part of it. It's an enormous one.

Teiser: Well, how did you all learn to be mural artists?

D. Cravath: By guess and by gracious. All I knew about it was what I'd seen Rivera do. But Raymond [Puccinelli] and I had a studio down next door to [Ralph] Stackpole's.* And Rivera worked in Stackpole's studio. So I went over there from time to time, and I sort of spent a lot of time watching him do the art school mural. So I saw the thing from start to finish as far as frescos were concerned.

Teiser: Was this in anticipation of your doing some of it?

D. Cravath: No, I had no interest in doing it. In fact, I felt murals were a mistake, because you can't move them. So I thought a better way were wall-hangings, and so Helen and I were-- I think I told you that.

Teiser: No, you never did.

D. Cravath: Well, anyhow, Helen Forbes and I had been working out at the zoo for several years, off and on. We'd go out in the morning before the people came in and sketch animals. Because we were both interested in sketching and drawing animals. And I, with my feeling about moveable murals, thought if it were going to be a wall decoration, it ought to be able to be moved, and so I made these great big drawings of animals and people and hung them like Japanese kakemonos, you see, so they could be rolled up and put down.

And so I had an exhibition of these, and--

Teiser: You just did this on your own?

D. Cravath: Everything on my own. It was comparatively easy to get into exhibits, I mean to get group exhibits or one-man exhibits. Not so easy to sell things.

Teiser: Where did you exhibit those?

*Ralph Stackpole's studio was at 716 Montgomery Street.
D. Cravath: I exhibited those at the Legion.* In fact that was my one one-man show at the Legion. And just about that time the WPA came along: Ahh! big animals! zoo! Here's some walls, here's a place to put an artist! Whee! So...

And then Helen and I took over that job with enthusiasm. I guess the WPA management didn't want to go in for true fresco out there, because at that time there was rough yellow plaster all over the walls.

Teiser: These are the interior walls.

D. Cravath: The interior walls of the Fleishhacker Memorial Mother's House, which we always referred to as the Mama House. It was given in memory of Herbert and Mortimer Fleishhacker's mother, for the use of mothers and children--to get them, as he told me, out of the hot sun out there. What hot sun nobody knew! [Laughter]

Teiser: Who told you?

D. Cravath: Fleishhacker.

Harroun: Was that Herbert?

D. Cravath: Yes. Herbert Fleishhacker.

Teiser: So the WPA just saw the space and thought it--

D. Cravath: Well, there were four lintels over the doorways. The entry doorway had a lintel over it, and the windows opposite the entry door had a lintel, and the door to the ladies and babies room had a lintel, and the one where the mamas changed their babies' diapers had a lintel; just over the doors. And that was the idea at first. We were just supposed to make decorations over the doors. So we thought, "Aha, aha! Maybe we can parlay this into something bigger and better." So we set to and made designs for the whole place.

Teiser: Which was quite an enterprise!

D. Cravath: Yes, oh sure. Give us an inch and we'd take a mile, but

*California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco.
D. Cravath: anyway...so we succeeded in selling the WPA on it. And we had to sell George Kelham, the architect of the place. And he was afraid that we would ruin the scale of his beautiful walnut panelling.

Teiser: Did you?

D. Cravath: No, I don't think so. [Laughter]

Harroun: I don't remember the walnut panelling.

D. Cravath: Well, it's from the floor up to about as far as eight feet, twelve feet, I forget how much now.

Teiser: And they specified the type of mural it was to be, the material you would use?

D. Cravath: No. Everybody got this wall to work toward, you see. They rushed around finding vacant walls all over the place--schools, and, well, not privately owned buildings, but any publicly owned building they could talk the people into giving space for murals so that they could hire the artists. And then the artists were supposed to make sketches and submit them and, if they were approved, then they would--

Teiser: Did they specify the medium or did you?

D. Cravath: We did, because it was far away, and fresco was just too much, so we decided that tempera would be the medium because we could have the whole thing plastered at once and then we could work at it at our--not leisure, but as long as we wanted to [laughter].

Harroun: What is the difference?

D. Cravath: Between tempera and fresco? Fresco is painting on wet plaster with just ground color and water, and the plaster sets around the grains of color. And tempera is done on dry plaster, or dry whatever it is, and the color is mixed with some sort of medium that holds it together. Oil paint holds--I mean the oil holds the oil paint together. Tempera is anything from egg, which we used, to casein and buttermilk, fig milk--all sorts of funny things.

Harroun: How did you happen to use egg? How did you decide upon it?
D. Cravath: Well, that was the thing the Italians used so that was the thing to use. We thought.

Teiser: Did you have a ready supply?

D. Cravath: Of eggs? Doesn't take very much. Everybody asked us how many eggs did you use. Didn't you use a huge amount of eggs? But we didn't. About every other day we'd mix up one egg yolk with the proper amount of water, and about twelve of us would paint for two days with that one egg. [Laughter] You mix it with the proper amount of water and then mix the emulsion with the color, put it on very, very thin. You can, of course, mix it a lot thicker.

Teiser: You didn't though?

D. Cravath: We didn't because we wanted the wall to show through. It gives it a beautiful sort of transparent or translucent effect that way, and ties it into the wall a great deal more. As with fresco--the wall shows through on the fresco. And I think that Matt Barnes* plastered that. Matt Barnes was a very good artist who made his living as a plasterer. He was a very good plasterer. And, I think he did--at least he was the head plasterer up at the tower. I'm not sure.

Harroun: Coit Tower?

D. Cravath: Coit Tower.

Teiser: You said you had how many people working with you on the mural?

D. Cravath: Oh, let's see. Helen and I were the head-persons [laughter] and they tried to give everybody as many helpers as possible to get as many people as possible on the job. So each of us had at least four, most of the time, helpers.

Teiser: How did you get them?

D. Cravath: How did we get them? Well, everybody wanted to work.

Teiser: Were they your friends?

D. Cravath: Friends and other artists equally good. But they needed jobs

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*Matthew Barnes
D. Cravath: and either they weren't interested or weren't lucky enough to get a wall of their own, and so they worked for other artists. We had a lovely time.

Teiser: That was one way other people learned the techniques of wall painting?

D. Cravath: They knew fully as much about it as we did at the time! [Laughter]

Teiser: But at least the next time they knew more; they knew more than they did at the beginning.

D. Cravath: Yes, but there wasn't any next time for our helpers because it took so long to do all those walls that by that time the WPA was long gone. [Laughter]

Teiser: So you didn't train a generation of them?

D. Cravath: Well, yes, but nothing came of it.

Harroun: How long did it take, how long did you work?

D. Cravath: Off and on four and a half years, I think it was. With time out because, in the meantime, at first there was (this sounds like Genesis and so on) but in the beginning there was the PWA, which was the Public Works Administration, and that only lasted for about six months or so as I remember. And then, they had to reorganize it for some reason or other, and it came out as the WPA, and so you had to get certified again on that; so we started it on one administration and finished it on the other.

And then there was a period in which we couldn't work on this because we had too much money, Helen and I. She had a slight--she had an allowance from her father; and Raymond and I had a--what was it?--it was an insurance policy that we hadn't cashed in. At that time, if you had any assets whatever you couldn't be a supervisor on one of these things, so since we were well started, about halfway along, nobody wanted to wreck the rest of it, and so we took quite a while. And in the meantime, there were government contests for murals at the post offices, and Helen and I won one of those down at Merced, so we did that down at Merced.

Harroun: I didn't know that.
D. Cravath: Yes, and Helen later did two, I think, or one. One of them up at Susanville.

Teiser: You did that in the middle of the Mama House?

D. Cravath: We did the Merced one. She did the Susanville one later.

Teiser: Who were some of the people that you had working with you on the Mama House?

D. Cravath: Jay Risling, Earl Daniels; both of those very good artists. And let's see, Luke Gibney for a while. Johnnie Collier. Who else for me--girl whose name I've been trying to remember, she was Florence Something, but I can't for the life of me remember her last name; and those were my helpers off and on. Earl Daniels was Helen's helper, if it makes any difference to anybody, and Clay Spohn also was Helen's helper. A girl called Tommie Thompson, and Marguerite Byron who was an artist. I think she was an etcher or lithographer, or something of the sort.

Harroun: Did these helpers also pose for you?

D. Cravath: Oh, yes. John [Collier] is a shepherd, Jay [Risling] is there somewhere. Luke [Gibney] is there. Nobody wore beards in those days, so we drew the faces very carefully and then put a tracing paper over it and drew the beards on. [Laughter] All sorts of friends and relatives. And, up in the tower* too. Practically all the people who worked up there, and some who didn't, are in the tower [murals].

Teiser: Are there photographs of the Mama House murals?

D. Cravath: I had some that I took.

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*Coit Tower
POST OFFICE MURALS

Teiser: How did you and Helen split the work in the Merced Post Office?

D. Cravath: It wasn't exactly split. Helen did one mural and I did another. There are two.

Teiser: How did you happen to know about it?

D. Cravath: Oh, the government was getting out competitions. After the WPA was pretty well over, they were still having competitions for post office murals. Quite a few of us artists did them. And so you were supposed to enter your sketches in competition, and we worked together on that, and won that competition. Then Helen went down and did hers and then I went down and did mine. For some reason or other we didn't go together. I don't know why.

Teiser: What's the theme of them?

D. Cravath: The discovery of Merced River. Couldn't think of anything else to do with Merced. [Laughter] I'll show you the pictures of it if you like.

Teiser: Were the murals large?

D. Cravath: Oh, let me see. Seems to me they were about twelve by eight.

Teiser: Are they still there?

D. Cravath: Oh yes, they're still there. They're up where people can't get at them.

Harroun: To write on?

D. Cravath: Or put lipstick on them or any of the other things they do. Indelible pencil and pen.

Teiser: What medium are they in?

D. Cravath: Same thing, tempera.

Harroun: Did Helen work in this, or did she work on a different post office?
D. Cravath: No, we both did things in the same post office. But there was a big lobby, as there is in most post offices, and then she was on one side and I was on the other. And about midway through, I climbed down from the scaffolding and went as far as I could to get a good view of what I was doing, hoping I was doing the right thing, and a man came up, saw me looking at them, and said, "Isn't this horrible what the Democrats are doing with these post offices?" [Laughter] So, if you'll turn that off I'll go and get the pictures, or do you--is this the time to look at them?

Harroun: Not necessarily...

Teiser: You spoke of doing big drawings of the animals at the zoo, and then having an exhibit at the Legion. What happened to them?

D. Cravath: I still have them. They were, in a way--well, they were in every way studies for whatever I thought I was going to do with them. I thought I was going to develop paintings that would roll up and down so they wouldn't be stuck on the walls. But, anyhow, I have the originals, as a matter of fact, and I also have pictures of them which I will show to you.

FAMILY AND EARLY LIFE

Teiser: Could we go back to the beginning of your career?

D. Cravath: Like what?

Teiser: Like, when were you born--this is what we're supposed to ask in an interview.

D. Cravath: Well, that I don't remember, personally. [Laughter]

Teiser: Don't you have any rumors? [Laughter]

D. Cravath: As far as I know I was born in San Antonio, Texas, on December 19, 1901.

Teiser: And your parents?

D. Cravath: Left there as soon as possible.
Teiser: Your parents' names?

D. Cravath: My mother's name was Cora Bolend and my father's name was Floyd Bolend, of all things. I hate the name Floyd. But anyhow, they were not together at that time.

Teiser: What was your mother's maiden name?

D. Cravath: Berry.

Teiser: Was she from Texas?

D. Cravath: No, it was sheer accident that I was born in Texas. My grandfather had some business there and my mother was at the time living with her parents, so she went there too.

Teiser: What part of the country was she from?

D. Cravath: Oklahoma, by way of Iowa. They had farms in Iowa, but my grandfather had been out in the Indian fighting deal with Sully* in the Dakotas and so on in the Civil War. And he had been bitten with the outdoor bug and the Indian bug and so forth, and he never got over it. And so when Indian territory was about to be opened up, he wanted to file on a claim. See, he could do that as a veteran. And then he thought it would be just wonderful to get a covered wagon and go out from Iowa to Indian territory. So that's what they did. It was a little after the big trek with covered wagons. By that time the big wagon trains had quit running, but he somehow got one.

Harroun: Did he file a claim there then?

D. Cravath: No, he was a surveyor and country lawyer, and then I think he had a store there also. But they were way out on the prairie.

Teiser: That was where your mother grew up?

D. Cravath: That was where my mother grew up. She was about twelve at the time they went there.

Teiser: Then where did you go after you left your birthplace?

*General Alfred Sully
D. Cravath: Well, we all came out here to California.

Teiser: Your grandfather too?

D. Cravath: Yes. Been here ever since.

Teiser: Where did you go?

D. Cravath: Around and about hunting a place to settle. And at that time the Ocean Shore railway* was going. In fact it hadn't been going very long, but it was just starting down the coast. And my grandfather thought, "Aha! This is another pioneering venture that will be big later on." So we went. He went down and built about the second or third house in what is now Rockaway Beach, where the quarry is.

I've just been writing all this, so if you'd like to read it—or do you want to ask questions?

Teiser: We'd like to ask some questions.

D. Cravath: Okay. Well, the quarry (the quarry hill is now almost demolished) was just starting. There was just a little piddly hole in the side of the hill. And he built a store, thinking, "What they need down here is a store." Which it was. So he was the postmaster and the storekeeper. And that was, let's see—we came out here just after the earthquake. Pardon me; "the fire."

Harroun: You had said you were six years old?

D. Cravath: I wasn't quite that because, let's see, my birthday is at the end of the year, so I'm about two years behind the times. And I forget, now, at what time of year we came out, but I know it was just after the fire because I remember being shown cracks with muddy ooze coming out of them along the railroad tracks as we came in by train, which people told me were from the earthquake.

Teiser: And then the family—this was you, your mother and your grandfather?**

*South of San Francisco.

**And Grandmother Berry. See Ruth Cravath's comment, p. 278.
D. Cravath: Yes.
Teiser: What was his full name?
D. Cravath: His name was Henry Berry. Henry N. as a matter of fact, but what of that?

Anyhow, we stayed there until I was about thirteen or so, no a little less than that--

Teiser: Did you go to school, grammar school?
D. Cravath: Finally. The grammar school was quite a distance in those days.
Teiser: So you didn't start school till then?
D. Cravath: So I didn't start school till I was about eight. But by that time I knew how to read and write and all those things, because my mother taught me at home. But then the school-teacher lived in the next valley, and she drove by in her horse and buggy and picked me up and took me to school. There were, I think, six kids in school, that's all. Of all grades.
Teiser: Where was the school?
D. Cravath: Do you know what Vallemar was?
Teiser: Yes.
D. Cravath: There used to be a railroad cut just north of Vallemar. It was just on the other side of that.
Teiser: No longer there?
D. Cravath: No, no. Years and years.
Teiser: Did you say you went to that school until you moved from Rockaway?
D. Cravath: Yes. Then we went down--my mother had always had the ambition to have a ranch of her own, a farm of her own. And especially a chicken farm. So she got me some bantam chickens or eggs; anyhow, there were six little bantams that I had, of course, my mother being a chicken fancier. And eventually we had quite
D. Cravath: a flock of chickens, none of them bantams. And so she persuaded my grandfather that it was time for her to go start her own farm, and we moved down to Montara.

Teiser: Just you and your mother, leaving your grandparents in Rockaway?

D. Cravath: Yes. Then, my grandfather got trouble with his heart and had to sell the store and they moved down with us until he died.

GROWING FLOWERS AT MONTARA

Teiser: How much of a place did you have in Montara?

D. Cravath: At Montara? Oh, we had, I think it was about eighty-two acres altogether, but it was about three finger canyons, and we started by raising vegetables. Although my mother had started out raising chickens. Then she married the man next door, and he was a truck gardener. So eventually they got into flowers, and it was a flower ranch for years and years.

Teiser: What was his name?

D. Cravath: Wagner.

Teiser: What was his first name?

D. Cravath: Arthur. Why you want to know all these things in connection with art I don't know.

Teiser: You have to take a long run at your subject [laughter].

D. Cravath: Yes, get everything in.

Teiser: No, it's interesting, Dorothy. So you had both chickens and flowers.

D. Cravath: Not really. We had gotten out of chickens as a business by that time.

Teiser: Did you combine the two properties then, your mother's and the one next door?
D. Cravath: Oh sure, and then they kept buying more and more and more, and adding to it. A canyon here and a canyon there.

Teiser: Why canyons when they're so difficult?

D. Cravath: Oh, those canyons were about fifty feet deep, with beautiful loam and soil that came down from the hill. And we had our own water supply from the hills and all sorts of things. And everything you threw out grew like mad. It's still kind of hard for me to get used to the Berkeley soil, because it wasn't like that.

Teiser: Well, how much land did you have altogether, finally in the end?

D. Cravath: I don't remember. At one time we had about eighty-two arable acres, and a whole lot of straight up and down brush mountainside. They kept buying more and more and more and going into debt more and more and more. Because my mother didn't like to see anybody else's property within the view. So her idea was to just get as much property as possible.

Teiser: How then were the flowers marketed?

D. Cravath: Truck. Trucked to San Francisco.

Teiser: Who drove the truck?

D. Cravath: Well, as a matter of fact, I started the flower farm accidentally in a way, because somebody down there, a neighbor—a neighbor several miles away—was selling pansies and marigolds in San Francisco. Taking them in a suitcase. That seemed like a good idea, so since we had a lot of flowers—I was going to art school at the time, and going in by Ocean Shore--

Teiser: --railway--

D. Cravath: --so I took a suitcase of flowers in. Walked up Powell Street to the art school, and on the way, distributed these flowers at the florists' shops there. There were several florists' shops on the way. And this seemed to be paying very well, so they [the family] enlarged it and pretty soon, after a year or two, they found themselves in the flower business. And then, they joined a co-op which was formed about that time
D. Cravath: and they hired a little garage up on Bush and Powell or something—or Pine—and all the growers would come in with their flowers, and all the florists would come in and buy them. Just a little bit of a place. And this has grown now to that great big huge flower co-op up on, what is it, Twelfth?

Harroun: Oh, the big flower market? Earlier it was in another place?

D. Cravath: Yes, down on Fifth Street for a long time.

Harroun: It was big.

D. Cravath: It was big, but nothing like what it is now.

Everybody would get in about half past six or seven, arrange their flowers, and the florists would come in and rush madly from place to place. Everything was sold by about eight o'clock. Rush out again.

Harroun: All the florists including Podesta's,* I recall.

D. Cravath: Oh yes, Podesta was one of our best customers. Because my mother always liked to try new flowers and Podesta's liked to buy new flowers, so they'd buy whatever strange flowers she had, or new flowers or whatever. I think we started the heather business on this coast.

Teiser: You know, Cath and I were down in Pescadero one year when they were packaging immortelles—straw flowers...

D. Cravath: We had those too.

Teiser: You started them?

D. Cravath: I think so. I don't remember anyone else doing them at the time.

Teiser: Did you start other things too, do you think? Growing other flowers?

D. Cravath: Oh, I don't think in a big way. We started them. We grew all

*Podesta & Baldocchi on Grant Avenue.
D. Cravath: the outdoor flowers that would grow. No greenhouse. We were the only ones who could keep these outdoor flowers growing through the winter, because of our nice little protected canyons and so on.

Teiser: Where did your mother get her seed?

D. Cravath: Oh, the big flower houses. Some here, some there.

Teiser: Outside of California?

D. Cravath: Outside, inside. One would have one kind of flower and another one another.

Teiser: Did you have years when the weather wiped you out?

D. Cravath: Not the weather; it was more the market. Flowers go by, at least they did then and I guess they still do, they go by fashion. And one grower would make a big hit with one kind of flower one year. Then the next year everybody would have that kind of flower, and nobody would buy it. So we tried to have flowers in big supply no more than two years for the same flower, because by that time the price would go down so far because everybody else was growing it.

Teiser: You once told us a story about your mother driving a truck of flowers up to San Francisco.

D. Cravath: Oh yes, she drove the truck.

Harroun: Federal men stopped her?

D. Cravath: No, she was hi-jacked by some bootleggers who stopped her.

Teiser: The bootleggers stopped her?

D. Cravath: Up in the Colma hills, in those desolate spots. She was driving this big truck with--let's see what was it--it was all completely encased in black oilcloth curtains to keep the wind off the flowers and so on. And here she was, driving this truck, the only one on the road, about six-thirty in the morning on a desolate, dark, rainy morning, and she got hi-jacked.

Teiser: The bootleggers thought she was a rival bootlegger?
D. Cravath: Yes. Or something. Anyhow, they insisted on taking most of the flowers out and rooting around, and they just would not believe that she didn't have something hidden under there. She had quite a few adventures.

Teiser: Did you ever send flowers in by train?

D. Cravath: No, by the time we were really into the flower game, the train was out of the train game. By the time I was going to art school, I went for about a year on the train and then it folded, and I drove in. Started at seven-thirty in the morning and got home at seven-thirty at night, as I recall.

Teiser: How long did your mother stay in the flower business, then?

D. Cravath: Well, first my dad* got sick. And he died. And she tried to keep the ranch going. She kept it going, I think about ten years. It was really going into the ground because she couldn't handle it. So by that time I was married to Chick** and we persuaded her to sell it and buy this little place down at San Gregorio. That's where she lived the rest of her life.

Teiser: So that she stayed actively in the flower business until about when?

D. Cravath: Don't ask me because I never can remember dates.

Teiser: Well, late thirties? Forties?

D. Cravath: Oh, more than that because—that must have been the late forties or fifty or something.

Teiser: To go back. You finished grammar school in Montara?

D. Cravath: Yes.

*Stepfather

**Austin M. Cravath
HIGH SCHOOL AND ART SCHOOL

Teiser:  How did you get to Half Moon Bay to high school?

D. Cravath: First year I went down in a school bus that was driven by somebody else. After that I drove the school bus. [Laughter] They had some absolutely insane school supervisors, I think. One of them was Peter B. Kyne, as I remember. And Peter B. Kyne, for some reason or other thought I would be a good sensible person to drive the school bus [laughter]. I was fifteen at the time, and I'd never driven a car in my life. [Laughter] Because my stepdad said, "Wait a while, you haven't any experience driving a car and I'll teach you one of these days." But then, when [laughter] Peter B. approached me about driving the school bus, "Oh, certainly, certainly." And over the weekend I started driving the school bus, which was an old Model T. There weren't very many kids to drive, so I suppose. [Laughter]

Teiser:  Did you get paid, or did you just get your transportation?

D. Cravath: I got paid. I think fifteen dollars a month, something like that. And I think the one reason they picked me was that I was at the far end [laughter], the first one in and the last one out. And I still remember with a degree of horror, driving up with a flourish in front of the high school and stopping and having a front wheel roll off and go cavorting down the street. Gives me chills when I think about it now.

Teiser:  Did you do it all the rest of your high school career?

D. Cravath: Yes.

Teiser:  Same bus?

D. Cravath: Same bus. Falling apart. That is, it was the same bus theoretically. And anyhow you could fix those old Fords with hairpins, and we all had hairpins in those days.

Teiser:  When did it become apparent that you were going to be interested in art?

D. Cravath: Purely accidental. Seems I could copy things so they looked just like the things, so everybody thought I should be an artist. And I thought maybe I should, too, so...
Teiser: What do you mean you could copy things?

D. Cravath: Oh, out of magazines, stuff like that.

Harroun: In high school?

D. Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: This great talent didn't become apparent before high school?

D. Cravath: No, as a matter of fact, I never did think it was a great talent, sort of accidental.

Teiser: But you weren't interested until high school?

D. Cravath: I didn't think about doing anything with it until high school. I was too busy doing other things. Growing up on a ranch you don't have an awful lot of time to sit around and draw.

Teiser: You were interested in animals, weren't you?

D. Cravath: Animals, flowers, plants, bugs and bees, landscapes (I mean land), dogs, cats, so on. Snakes, snails, snips.

Teiser: Did you go directly from Half Moon Bay high school to art school? How did that happen?

D. Cravath: Well, that was the only place to go to get art lessons. Or any other kind of lessons that I took.

Teiser: How did it happen that you decided really seriously that you were interested in art? Had anybody in your family been an artist?

D. Cravath: Not that I know of.

Teiser: Did you ever know an artist?

D. Cravath: No, matter of fact I never saw an original painting until I started to art school. I remember how extremely thrilled and excited I was when I did come up, because the first exhibit I saw was a beautiful exhibit at the old Palace of Fine Arts of gothic tapestries. Beautiful ones of the period of the unicorn and the lady.
Teiser: Were your high school teachers aware of the art school in San Francisco?

D. Cravath: Oh, yes.

Teiser: Was there an art teacher who encouraged you?

D. Cravath: No, they were horrified because they thought I should go to college. And have an academic career.

Harroun: You were a pretty good student then?

D. Cravath: Apparently.

Teiser: I should think you must have been, because...

D. Cravath: Very simple in those days, compared to now.

Teiser: Did you like other subjects?

D. Cravath: Actually, I was more interested in writing and music and stuff like that than I was in painting. Of course I knew more about it.

Teiser: You write very well.

D. Cravath: I had been read to since I was eighteen months old or something.

Teiser: It shows doesn't it?

D. Cravath: No, I don't know whether it does or not.

Harroun: Well, you write very well.

D. Cravath: Thank you.

Teiser: When you once decided to go to art school, was there enough money in the family to finance it?

D. Cravath: We made enough and I think the tuition was eighteen dollars a month for full time, and I was driving to San Francisco after the first year so I got transportation paid by passengers. I had three or four passengers.

Teiser: You went on driving--
D. Cravath: A bus, yes I went on driving a bus. [Laughter]

Teiser: What did you do, take commuters up?

D. Cravath: Yes, office people, who had been commuting on the old Ocean Shore.

Teiser: There was no rival bus line to yours?

D. Cravath: No bus line, rival or otherwise.

Teiser: How much did you charge your passengers?

D. Cravath: I don't remember.

Harroun: Did you take flowers up to sell?

D. Cravath: Oh, yes. About the end of that time, we drove in with the truck with the flowers twice a week.

Teiser: Did you hitch a ride on the truck then?

D. Cravath: No, not at four o'clock or so in the morning, not if I could help it.

Teiser: When you went to art school, was it just a full solid day of classes?

D. Cravath: That's right. Life drawing, sketch, painting, commercial art and design. Nice full days.

Harroun: What year was it that you started?

D. Cravath: I never can remember years. I can look it up, I suppose.

Teiser: How old were you then?

D. Cravath: I started when I was seventeen.

Teiser: That would be 1919, I guess. This was just after the first World War. Was there a period then of kind of rebirth, revitalization in art, as there seemed to be after the second World War?
D. Cravath: I wouldn't know, because I wasn't in it. I was a small, green, country child at the time. But I don't think so. I think they had quite an art colony for the time, before the war. You know Mathews,* and what's his name, that sculptor, who did animals?

Harroun: Bufano?

D. Cravath: No, no. Bufano came out during the 1915 fair. No, I'll think of him. He did those crouching lions out at the Eighth Street entrance to the Park,** Douglas Tilden, also.

Teiser: Who were the people who were teaching at the art school?

Harroun: This was the Hopkins Art Institute?

D. Cravath: Yes. It was where the Mark Hopkins Hotel is now. And it was built on the ruins of the Mark Hopkins mansion. Just a shack, really.

Harroun: In back of it?

D. Cravath: No, on top. There were these great huge foundations, and all the underground passages and all sorts of things still there, that didn't burn. And the basement and tunnels and secret rooms, and heaven knows what else. We had a lot of fun exploring them. And then on top of this great huge massive base, there was this sort of shack, one story high and kind of unfinished, as I remember, painted gray or something on the sides. And Lee Randolph was the head of the school, and Mr. and Mrs. Macky were painting teachers. Spencer Macky and Constance Macky. And Gertrude Albright was, I thought, the best teacher there. She taught sketch. And Rudolph Schaeffer was there.

Harroun: Teaching?

D. Cravath: Teaching design. And then Maynard Dixon was there, just I think for one term or one year or something. Ray Boynton. Let's see, who else? I said Lee Randolph was the head of it. Harold Von Schmidt was teaching commercial art for a while.

*Arthur Mathews

**Arthur Putnam did the figures at this entrance to Golden Gate Park.
D. Cravath: I think Judson Starr taught commercial art later. Joe Sinel, too, who taught a course in lettering after a while; not when I started.

Teiser: I suppose they seemed to you, as a youngster, very well established.

D. Cravath: As a matter of fact they were. They were the well-known artists in San Francisco at the time.

[Interviewers' note: That was the end of the two-part interview. We had intended to continue, and went to see her several times, hoping to interview her, but she was not strong enough to talk very much in that sustained way. She died May 24, 1974.]
RUTH CRAVATH ON DOROTHY WAGNER PUCCINELLI CRAVATH
(Interview 9, March 20, 1975)

EARLY YEARS

Teiser: Ruth Cravath will comment in this interview upon Dorothy
Cravath and add to the interview we did earlier with Dorothy.

Ruth, you pointed out to us two oversights in Dorothy's
interview. What were they?

Cravath: Oversights, yes. Well, the first one was that in moving from
Texas to California, you said, "Well, then, it was you and
your mother and your grandfather," and she said, "Yes." Well,
I didn't know her grandfather, but I did know her grandmother,
Grandma Berry, and she was a remarkable character and very
much a part of the ranch, and I suppose so much a part of
Dorothy's life that she didn't even mention her because I
immediately noticed the omission. A couple of times there was
no mention of Mrs. Berry, who lived, well, all during Dorothy's
art school years. I can't remember when she died, but I think
it was not too long before Dorothy married my brother, or maybe
afterwards. So Mrs. Berry lived a long, long life and she had
her own little apartment at the ranch and she did a great deal
of the cooking and she was charming.

Teiser: Then the other omission was--?

Cravath: Well, my understanding was that the flower ranch, at the time of
the war, was converted into a chicken ranch. Mrs. Wagner had
always liked chickens. I think I'm correct about this. I might
not be, but I know for many, many years it was a chicken ranch
and when I moved up here sixteen years ago, I saved all my egg
Cravath: boxes that we'd send down there. I know when she moved to San Gregorio, there was never a flower ranch there. You remember those long, long sheds that were chicken-raising sheds, I think, if you've been down there.

Teiser: Let's go back, then, to Dorothy's own life and career. Do you think she covered her early life adequately in the second part of our interview with her?

Cravath: By her early life you mean art school days and so forth?

Teiser: Yes, up through art school.

Cravath: Yes, as far as I know. I mean, it was very interesting to me because she told things that I had never heard. You see, I didn't know Dorothy until 1921, I think it was, when I came out here and by that time she had been going to art school several years and I believe the railroad was no longer running. She wasn't commuting by the railroad. So, that early part I know nothing about, but I found it very interesting.

Teiser: Do you remember what your earliest impressions of her were?

Cravath: Well, of course, she was a magnificent draftsman and artist. I stood in great awe of her as an artist.

Teiser: Did others think so too?

Cravath: I think so. Our more intimate association seems to stem from when we met up in Plumas County on a camping trip with Dorr Bothwell. Dorothy and Dorr were very close friends and they shared a studio together for a number of years. I was camping up in Plumas County with Mary Wilkie, an artist friend, and lo and behold, Dorothy and Dorr and Mr. and Mrs. Wagner appeared. That's when we went up Mt. Elwell together.

Teiser: What year was that?

Cravath: [Pauses to think.] I'm not sure, but it was early or mid-'20s.

Teiser: That was before Dorothy's marriage to Raymond Puccinelli?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Long before that, because we were doing Players' Club.

Teiser: Did she then take a studio with Dorr right after art school? What was the chronology there?
Cravath: Well, right after art school, I believe before she had a place with Dorr, she lived at the Girls' Friendly Society. Do you know where that is? That's on Sutter Street. I remember spending the night with her there after we went to a party. She lived there.

Then the next move from that was, I think, Dorr and Dorothy lived in this hotel on Sutter Street. I'm trying to think of the name of the hotel. I think it was the Little Hotel. And where they worked then—I don't know whether they worked in the hotel room or what. But Dorothy, I believe, was living there when we did the costumes and settings for the Players' Club. She didn't tell you about that?

Teiser: No. How was she making a living in those years?

Cravath: She was doing some commercial art, and weekends she would go down to the ranch quite often. We'd all go down to the ranch and then we'd come in early in the morning with the flower truck. I remember that strong fragrance of stocks. They raised a great many stocks. It was fun to come into the flower market. Dorr Bothwell for many years quoted something that was said. They were at the flower market, Dorothy and Dorr with Mr. and Mrs. Wagner. Well, of course, Dorr, not being a member of the family, wasn't officially part of the firm and somebody asked Dorr something and thought she was part of it. And somebody else, who knew the situation, said, "She don't know nothing. They don't let her sell." [Laughter] So, Dorr quoted that for years; "She don't know nothing. They don't let her sell."

Teiser: [Laughter] Well, Dorothy, then, I presume, was paid something for her services to the family.

Cravath: Presumably. And she probably had an allowance from the family, I really don't know.

Teiser: What about the commercial work?

Cravath: Well, she did at one time have a—I mean, at the time that my twins were born—I can't remember what outfit she was working for, but she did have a regular job.

Teiser: Perhaps Knight-Counihan. That was mentioned.
WORK AS AN ARTIST

Teiser: To go back, then. At the time you worked with her on the costumes--

Cravath: The Players' Club. The costumes and the settings we made. This was quite a job. That's when she and Dorr, I believe, were living in this hotel on Sutter Street. So Dorr would come down and advise. She didn't work with us very much. It may have been that they had the studio in the Montgomery Block at that time. I'm not sure. Because I think they had the studio in the Montgomery Block where they worked while they were living in the hotel. Then I think I told you Marian Trace and I had the studio next door to theirs.

Teiser: Yes. In addition to these various kinds of applied work, was Dorothy doing fine arts constantly too?

Cravath: Drawing and painting, yes.

Teiser: Sculpture?

Cravath: She didn't do very much sculpture and she's a natural sculptor. I mean, she's so good at it. But she didn't do a great deal. She did some wood carving after she married Raymond. Well, you've seen some of the sculpture she did. She could do most anything. As you know, she could write and she was an extraordinarily gifted or talented person with great facility.

Teiser: What kind of painting was she doing in those early years? Is it appreciably different from the kind she did later?

Cravath: Yes. As Anne* said, it was quite dated. It belonged to the early '20s. As a matter of fact, I could show you, some time; I have some of them here.

Teiser: Can you characterize them in words?

Cravath: Well, they were very strong always and a little blocky looking, chunky, and a little bit different from this painting [gestures], which was her very mature style.

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*Dorothy Cravath's daughter
Teiser: Her self-portrait here.

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: What date was this self-portrait done?

Cravath: Oh, she didn't sign things. I don't know.

Teiser: Didn't sign or date them?

Cravath: I don't believe so. That's a bad thing.

Teiser: In the theatre, then, she met Raymond Puccinelli?

Cravath: Right, right. You see, there were two operations going on in the Players' Club. One was called the Players' Club and Reginald Travers was the director. Reginald Travers. He was quite a character. That was the adult section and that's where we met Walter Goldberg, who subsequently sent us to Europe in 1959.

Raymond Puccinelli was one of the actors for the children's theatre. Mrs. John J. Cuddy wrote children's plays and produced them. She produced them at the same time that the Players' Club was working because, of course, the children's would be matinees, Saturday matinees, known as the Children's Theater, and the Players' Club would produce theirs at other hours.

We did the sets for the Players' Club, the adults. I guess Louis Goldstein did the costumes.

Teiser: Did you and Dorothy get paid?

Cravath: Yes, we got paid. I don't think it was very much, but we felt very important getting paid. [Laughter]

Teiser: Raymond was then an actor. Was he also an artist?

Cravath: He was an actor. No, he hadn't started to be an artist then. I remember he'd done quite a bit of acting. He did some acting with Hedwiga Richer, who later I encountered when I was teaching at the Dominican convent. She was teaching drama and elocution, or whatever they call it, over there. Of course, she was a much older woman. Raymond would play the parts of the prince and the kings in the Players' Club.
Teiser: He was just a youngster?

Cravath: Well, he was a young man. He was twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, or something like that.

Teiser: Did he become interested in sculpture or the arts through you and Dorothy, do you think?

Cravath: He may have. He was in my sculpture class in the Montgomery Block. We discussed that too, didn't we?

Teiser: Yes.

Cravath: I remember very well the first thing he did there, and he was so interested when I saw him in Florence last April that I could remember it. He inscribed his book to the one who remembers his first sculpture, which he doesn't remember. It was a very sculptural torso, very solid and simple and sculptural.

Teiser: Did you and Dorothy think he was talented?

Cravath: I don't remember. I guess we did. From then on he did sculpture. But he did not go to the California School of Fine Arts. But Dorothy taught him a great deal, of course, because they were married in 1928, and he worked very hard and she made him the artist that he is, I think. I really do.

Teiser: How long were they married?

Cravath: Ten years, I believe.

Teiser: What was she doing all that time then?

Cravath: She was painting and doing some commercial art. She did during that decade, I believe, a great deal of the volume of the painting that she's done.

Teiser: A large part of it?

Cravath: Yes, the '30s. They were separated or divorced, I think, in 1938.

Teiser: It seems to me someone said that Dorothy might have gone on to be a fine sculptor if she hadn't stepped back because he was doing sculpture.
Cravath: It may have been. That may be. Well, she certainly could have been a fine sculptor. I mean, she had a great sense of sculpture and painting too.

Teiser: There was some indication that she'd continued painting instead of sculpture because she didn't want to compete with him.

Cravath: It may be. I mean, I don't think we discussed it in so many words, but that's quite possible. Well, she helped him on some of his things.

Teiser: She did?

Cravath: Yes, as she did me, and didn't merely help me; she practically did it, the crucifix we did together, the walnut, a wood carving.*

Teiser: So she was on her way to being a very well recognized painter, would you say?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Definitely. In listening to the recording that you made of her, I was continually impressed with how she underrated herself always, you know. She never was a publicity seeker. She was very humble. She underrated herself always.

Teiser: But she continued in a fairly firm course, did she, working?

Cravath: Yes, I think so.

Teiser: I mean, she just didn't stop ever.

Cravath: Not until her child was born. She didn't completely stop, but she did very little of her individual painting after Anne was born. She did the commissions, and that's why Anne thinks of her mother just as doing these big murals and commissions. She had no idea of what a good painter she was. It took the outside pressure of a commission and a job, I think, to make her organize her life to work because she was so absorbed with Anne, her daughter.

Teiser: After her divorce from Raymond Puccinelli, she lived alone on Telegraph Hill, didn't she, for some time?

*See pp. 174-176.
Yes. Let's see.

Greenwich Street.

I think so, yes. Well, you knew her there.

Yes, that's when I first knew her.

She had a little apartment there.

In Ann Mundstock's class I met her.

Yes.

Did she have a studio there on Greenwich? Did she work there?

She worked there, yes.

Was her divorce hard on her? Did it shake her work?

[Pauses] I think perhaps it did because I remember our discussing this point at the time of my divorce. The year just before, when the situation led up to it, was when I was working for the Fair and I said I was so grateful to have that job. You know, it was so therapeutic. It just saved me, I felt, having to go to the studio every day and having a definite assignment, having to do this. She said that she was entirely different, that she didn't want to be distracted. I mean, it was harder for her to go through an emotional crisis if she had to work on something.

She did some work for the Fair, but I guess that was after the separation. But it was interesting to me that we felt so differently about that.

We didn't get to a discussion of her work at the Fair, with Dorothy.

She did some murals. I think perhaps I have some reproductions of them to show you. And which building was it? Do you remember, Catherine?

There's something in the fair guidebook,* and there's a picture

*Listed is "Repose," a mural in the southeast tower of the Court of the Moon and Stars.
Harroun: in that Neuhaus book of one of her murals. Helen Forbes had a--

Cravath: A companion piece to it, I think, yes.

Harroun: A companion piece, yes. The two together were called "The First Garden."

Cravath: There was great foliage, great big leaves and so forth around it.

She's spoken in that tape, you know, about going over to the art school and watching Diego Rivera work quite a bit. I don't remember her doing it. I was very absorbed with my family and didn't see as much of her then as I have some other times.

Teiser: Did she have any other large commissions that she didn't discuss in our interview with her?

Cravath: Well, the Mother House was the big one. That was the big one because that they worked on over several years and that's her outstanding commission, I think, of all of her career.

Harroun: I do too.

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD

Cravath: Well, then, after Anne was born--but we haven't gotten to that yet.

Teiser: When did she marry your brother?

Cravath: They married--let me see. [Pauses] '43, I think. I think it was '43.

Harroun: I remember Dorothy called me.

Cravath: And told you. I think it was '43, yes.

Harroun: I think so.

Cravath: I was on Filbert Street.
Teiser: Did you know about it in advance, Ruth?

Cravath: Yes, just immediately in advance, but I wasn't supposed to tell anybody.

Teiser: Were you surprised?

Cravath: Not terribly, no, because they were constantly together. No, I wasn't surprised. Naturally, nothing could have pleased me more. I was very, very pleased, but not surprised.

Teiser: And she went on working in the early years of her marriage? I don't remember when Anne was born.

Cravath: Yes. Well, just before she was married to my brother she had been working out at the museum of the Legion of Honor, you remember, not as an artist, but she had a regular job. I mean, artists always had to do something that wasn't connected with art to make a living.

Teiser: What was she doing?

Cravath: She had some kind of a clerical job or something at the museum.

Teiser: She had had some kind of a job at the Fair, hadn't she, at the 1939 Fair?

Cravath: Yes, she did. Oh, yes.

Teiser: What was that?

Cravath: She sold catalogues, at the information desk I think it was. She had lots of amusing anecdotes about that, a great many. We were always laughing.

I believe she must have gone from there to the Legion of Honor, because I think she was there just before they were married or about that time.

Teiser: Then she stopped working when she was married?

Cravath: Yes, she stopped working when she married Chick. They were with me for a little while, for a few months, and then they took the house on Jones Street around the corner from the art school.
Harroun: I remember that.

Cravath: Up the long flight of steps, you see.

Teiser: When was Anne born?

Cravath: Anne was born in—let's see. When did I say they were married?

Teiser: You said '43.

Cravath: Well, then, Anne was born just a year later. But she was living on Jones Street then.

Harroun: You and I brought the baby home.

Cravath: We brought the baby home, yes. The baby had—what was it?—impetigo or something and had to be left in the hospital.

Harroun: Yes, it was impetigo.

Cravath: And I remember very well you and me walking up the stairs with the baby. [Chuckle]

Harroun: Yes.

Teiser: Dorothy was not young when she had Anne, then.

Cravath: No, no. She wasn't. She was about forty-one or forty-two.

Teiser: She was very pleased to have a child, was she?

Cravath: Oh, yes. And a little girl she wanted so much. I remember so well. I was at the hospital when Anne was born and she wanted a girl, so everybody was very happy when Anne was a girl. Of course, I thought it would be nice to have a boy for the Cravath name, but [laughter] I was glad Anne was a girl.

Teiser: Then, as you said, Dorothy worked mainly on commissions after that.

Cravath: After that, yes. She really devoted herself practically entirely to Anne for many years. I don't remember a commission until after they'd moved to Berkeley and she did several big important commissions.
WORK IN LITURGICAL ART

Teiser: I remember she took a studio on Telegraph Avenue, did she not?

Cravath: Right. She had a large studio on Telegraph Avenue. And she designed the frescoes for the church in Half Moon Bay, Our Lady of the Pillar, there. Now, Dorothy didn't get to this in her interview, did she?

Teiser: No, she did not.

Cravath: Well, she did the big fresco over the altar at the end of the church of Our Lady of the Pillar and Angels. Then she did the fourteen stations of the cross too. I think they were fresco. They might have been tempera. I know the big one was a fresco; it was true fresco done on wet plaster. And Edith Hamlin was her helper. They stayed down there together working on that, so Edith can tell you a great deal about that, and how cold it was up on the scaffold.

Teiser: I remember they stayed in a motel.

Cravath: They stayed in a motel. And Edith was saying--well, the night before last I had dinner out there--how cold it was. And Dorothy was always very deliberate, you know, about everything, and very thoughtful and wanted to be sure and figure things out. Edie said she nearly froze to death sitting there waiting for Dorothy to make up her mind sometimes! [Laughter]

I remember when I was working for the Players' Club, we'd discuss what we'd do about something and she'd say, "Yes, but--." [Laughter] But the result was very beautiful always.

Teiser: Do I remember that Chick was the model for one of the angels?

Cravath: Well, Anne was for several. Was Chick too? I don't remember.

Teiser: I think so, because I remember a discussion of the sex of angels.

Cravath: Well, they're not feminine in sex, no. You refer to the archangels as "he" and they have masculine names, you know Michael and Gabriel and so forth.

Teiser: Yes. I thought she said that she used Chick's torso.
Cravath: She might have, very likely! [Laughter] Well, poor Chick had to pose for both of us from time to time.

Well, that was really a big job because of the fourteen stations of the cross too, which they did in place. It was all done in place in that church at a cold time of year with the door open.

Harroun: How did she get that commission?

Cravath: Now, what's the sequence? Was that before or after she did her mosaic at St. Peter's?

Harroun: Before.

Cravath: It was before the St. Peter's mosaic. Well, after all, the architects would be aware of her work out at the Mother's House. I mean, she already had established herself as a mural artist, and then she did a mural in the Merced post office. She had done that, so she already had a reputation, and the architect, whoever he was--I can't remember--but he's the one who I think gave her the commission.

Teiser: I remember some sort of contretemps with the priest.

Cravath: Oh, yes. They had a dreadful time with him and he used to come in and say, "Well, that will have to be rectified." That was his favorite word, to "rectify" things. I never met him. [Chuckle]

Harroun: I think we did. I think you said that Dorothy reconciled working for the Catholic church because she knew people at Half Moon Bay.

Cravath: Oh, yes. That was so amusing because, of course, I have always been more friendly toward the Catholic church than Dorothy. When I was working at Hanna Center, which was before that, she said, well, how did I feel about working for the Catholic church? Wasn't it a problem for me? And I said, "Not at all." It was no adjustment to make; it was just fine.

So when she took this job, I said, "Well, now, Dorothy, how about that? How do you reconcile that with your conscience?" "Oh," she said, "Well, of course, I know those people down there." She had the answer right away. She knew that neighborhood. [Laughter] She was among friends. So I was very pleased that she was able to reconcile her conscience with that job.
Teiser: What's the series of mosaics that she was working on in her studio when this picture was taken? [Shows picture.]

Cravath: This is the large mosaic cross on St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Redwood City. Previous to her doing this, I had the commission to do the corpus, the crucifix in the church, and she, as you know, more than helped me. I mean, she was an expert wood carver. I made the design of the plan. It was my job, but she was more than half of it.*

She met the priest, Father Peter Bowes, and all the committee and everybody, and the architect, Kingsford Jones. We liked him very much. So that's how she got the commission to do the mosaic cross on the facade.

Teiser: Do I remember that that was why she took the studio, because she needed that space to work?

Cravath: Maybe. I mean, she certainly did need a space. Now, she did this after the Half Moon Bay?

Harroun: After.

Cravath: Well, she worked on the Half Moon Bay thing in the studio too.

Harroun: Oh, did she?

Cravath: Yes, I think so. She made the cartoons. And then you remember the sculpture she did for the church in Woodside. She called it The Madonna Boat. She also did that in that studio. She modeled it and had a piece mold made of it into which she pressed ceramic clay and had it fired. It is about three feet high. It's the madonna and child. A reproduction of it stood near her front door on the table for ages. The piece mold is right down in my basement now.

Teiser: Describe it in words. You said a boat?

Cravath: Well, she called it The Madonna Boat. That was the setting for it. It was, I guess, at least three feet high, a standing figure, and quite charming and very traditional, of the madonna and the child and it was for this little Catholic church down

*See pp. 174-176.
Cravath: at Woodside. It's out in the garden. You can see it there. And she made a stained glass and mosaic niche for it, which she called The Madonna Boat. That was made in the back yard.

Harroun: Yes, now I remember.

Teiser: How did she happen to get that commission?

Harroun: That was after St. Peter's?

Cravath: I think so. And after the religious art show at the de Young Museum that I was very active with, and Dorothy was--I mean, everybody knew about her. I don't really remember just how this came about. Partly through her interest in the stained glass and mosaic, you see. So she modeled this in clay and I think she had an expert mold maker make the piece mold because it's quite involved, the piece mold, for a big thing like that. I helped her press one. She pressed them and put it together and we worked on it together. I don't know how many she made; I think just the original and the one that she has that Anne will eventually have in the garden somewhere. (I think she's pleased with it.) She may have made others.

There's a glaze on the one she had at home, as you remember, and it seems to me that the one down in Woodside doesn't have a glaze. I think it's terra cotta color. She experimented with the glaze. It's quite a lovely thing.

Teiser: How did she become interested in stained glass?

Cravath: Well, she loved to do anything that was partly a craft or architectural.

Teiser: She was interested in all materials, wasn't she?

Cravath: Yes, very.

Teiser: Including wool, as I remember, and dog hairs, which she was spinning.

Cravath: Dog hairs, yes, absolutely.

Teiser: It's amazing, just amazing.

Cravath: Yes. She loved crafts as well as fine arts. Well, I mean, there's a very fine line, you see. She made a beautiful job of the madonna in clay.
Teiser: What other major commissions--?

Cravath: Well, you see, there's that and the Redwood City, the facade of St. Peter's. She did the cross and then afterwards subsequently did the band over the door with the name of the church. I think she also did the processional cross for St. Peter's. Yes, she did, I remember.

Harroun: I think she did.

Cravath: And that was partly enamel, wasn't it, or mosaic and enamel? And then she did a processional cross for a little Episcopal church over in Montclair too. That was when we were all working in liturgical art. I may have been kind of responsible for her doing some of these things.

So, let's see. Now we've mentioned Our Lady of the Pillar, which is a Roman Catholic church. St. Peter's was Episcopal, and this church across the bay in Montclair was a little Episcopal church. Phil Pratt designed the candlesticks for that.

Then she did two or three mosaics for the Dominican Sisters in San Rafael. The first one she did was a mosaic of Joan of Arc, St. Joan, which one of the senior classes gave to the convent as a memorial for one of their members who had died, I think during the senior year or something, and her name was Joan. Then Dorothy did St. Dominic for them. Now, I am not sure whether she did a third one or just the two mosaics, but she did two anyway and they have them. The school is not in San Rafael now. The high school is in San Anselmo. It's away from the central convent, but I've seen them over there.

Teiser: Are there other major things?

Cravath: I'm trying to think. No, I think that's about it.
Teiser: You know, for someone who was said to be a procrastinator, she did quite a lot.

Cravath: She did. She did. But you'll notice that these things that we've talked about lately were all commissions, and a commission is a shove. I mean, she didn't even finish this magnificent painting that Edith Hamlin has now of her mother and her daughter, Anne. Edith took one look at it when we were storing her paintings away here and said, "That's a museum piece," and she has invested seventy-five dollars in a frame for it. It saw it the other night. And she has pulled it together. I hope it will be in the Oakland Museum. She, of course, has to talk to Anne about it. But Dorothy never considered it finished. It didn't have the quality that that self-portrait has, like the pencil.* There was one part of it that was like that. There was an Eagle drafting pencil. [Laughter] She loved to paint pencils apparently. And there was a pink satin pillow that Anne was sitting on, the child. But it's a beautiful painting.

And I presume because it's her child, it's very hard to do things of your own children. There was a little portfolio of drawings that she had labeled "Anne" and Kai agreed when we looked at them that they were not her best portrait drawings. She was too close to Anne to be able to really do it, and I think that's why she didn't finish the picture of her mother and Anne; it was too much of an emotional closeness. But it is a beautiful painting. You probably don't remember it, or do you?

Harroun: I did see it when it was hanging unfinished there.**

Teiser: You have her paintings here now. About how many would you say she has done? Can you guess at all?

Cravath: Well, I can tell you how many I have stored here. We have, **

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*In her self-portrait, Dorothy Cravath holds a pencil, very precisely delineated.

**See also p. 297.
Cravath: that is—oh, and then I added yours, Catherine,* I think it's thirty-five or something. Then there were some little sketches. There were fifteen. Anyway, it was over fifty, but some of them, the last fifteen, are little sketches.

Teiser: Paintings?

Cravath: Yes. They're all paintings, yes. All paintings. So, there are over fifty paintings stored here and, of course, an artist sells things and gives some away. And Dorothy was not meticulous the way Dorr Bothwell is about keeping records of everything. Dorr has a card file on every painting that she's made and where and when it was exhibited and who finally bought it and so forth, which is what every artist should do, but not many do.

Teiser: Could you guess that Dorothy had sold, say, an equal number?

Cravath: I doubt whether she sold an equal number. She was never a self-promoter and I very much doubt that she did sell that many. You almost had to knock her down to get something out of her, you know. [Chuckle]

Harroun: I know I bought those two paintings, but where I bought them I don't remember.

Cravath: Where you bought them. Maybe it wasn't easy! [Laughter]

Harroun: It wasn't hard because I think she knew that she could see them.

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: She also knew you needed them, that you were furnishing a house.

Cravath: Well, I had hanging in my house on Filbert Street—it was hanging in Sam's room—this painting, which is stored here now, called Ghosts—in the mountains, tree trunks, you know. It's beautiful. You remember it maybe.

Harroun: Yes.

* Catherine Harroun owns two.
Anyway, Anne said Sam could have it and I think it would be very nice for him. So when he comes next week, they'll probably take it with them. Then I have the one she did of Beth, which she gave me, or did I buy that? I can't remember. I'm not sure. I think I bought it, but it doesn't make any difference; it's mine. [Laughter]

She was going to make a companion piece of Sammy.

But she didn't get to it. Was that it?

Well, I remember his going down to--well, you see, the one of Beth she did when Beth was very little. She made a drawing, a beautiful drawing about 14" x 16", which Sam Bell had. I forget how he acquired it. When I was living on Leavenworth Street, I remember Sam went down to pose for her. She worked several times, but I never saw a painting. I don't know what happened. It didn't evolve.

Again, she was versatile in her paintings, wasn't she, from a still life that Catherine has, to a landscape that Catherine has, to portraits?

Yes, yes.

Did she do many still lifes?

Flowers. Well, quite a few, quite a few. But she did many, many, many portraits.

She loved animals and she loved plants.

Yes.

Was her love of animals--wild animals, I think--ever reflected in her paintings?

Oh, yes. Definitely, in her drawings. I remember when Tom, her daughter's fiance, brought the paintings over here several weeks ago, he said, "Oh, that woman had a special gift for animals." Oh, yes. That's one reason, I think, that they selected the theme of Noah's Ark for the Mother House. She said she and Helen selected the theme, didn't she?
Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: She spent many, many, many, many, many hours out at the zoo drawing the animals and knew all the personnel out there as well as all the animals; she was personally acquainted with them.

Teiser: I remember her saying at some time, and I don't think it was on the tape, that she roamed the hills behind her mother's ranch when she was a youngster and liked to watch the animals.

Cravath: Oh, yes. She knew a great deal about animals and flowers and trees. She was a naturalist as well as an artist. She was a most extraordinary person.

WAYS OF WORKING

Harroun: She often mentioned that it was very difficult for her to ever bring something to completion, that she could work on it, but--

Cravath: But to finish it was difficult.

Harroun: But to finish it was very difficult, and I suppose that that changed with commissions.

Cravath: That was very obvious, I think, but a commission is a responsibility; she had to finish them, you see. And that's why she never felt this painting of her mother and Anne was finished. And I always felt, having heard Dorothy, you know, that it wasn't finished, but it's a complete and beautiful composition. I mean, it's plenty finished really, but it does have a little different character than the others.

Teiser: Was she in general a perfectionist?

Cravath: Yes, yes. She was a perfectionist in her way of working. I always said that I liked to have, when I'm cutting stone or something, have every step look pleasing to me; I mean, in roughing a thing out in stone. Of course, I like the material itself in the big block, and take out a plane here and here. I always tried to balance it, so if I had to stop working--I mean, I always could like it. Oh, she said she wasn't that way
Cravath: at all. She'd never finish anything if she went through the process of pleasing herself. It wasn't until it was finished that she would like it. She worked very differently. Isn't that interesting?

She didn't follow my way of working. She said she never would finish it then, you see, but she had to leave it so that it demanded more. Well, mine demand more too. But I remember when I was roughing out the Starr King, there was a young artist from Germany visiting Monica Hannasch, and she brought him over to the stoneyard. Of course, it was just blocked out. It looked like a lot of finished sculpture; I mean, it was purely abstract and he thought it looked finished, as some of the work the way they do, just an abstract mass. But, see, that wouldn't please Dorothy.

Well, this is interesting in her household work too; I mean, in her decoration. I mean, she was so sort of honest. She could live with something unfinished and ragged. I wanted to patch that carpet on her stairs. Do you remember? It wore out, that old blue carpet. I wanted to patch it like I did here, you know, with tape. I said, "Dorothy, let me bring some tape over and iron it on." Oh, no. She wasn't going to have anything done to that until it was done correctly with a new carpet and everything. So for years we tramped up and down over the worn out carpet. You see, I'm not honest. I'd cover up the bad part. She's the kind of a housekeeper that her drawers and her closets and everything were in order.

Teiser: They were?

Cravath: Oh, yes. But on the surface, as you remember, there was a slight clutter. I'm the kind of a housekeeper that can even sweep things under carpets and chuck things under beds as long as it's out of sight. So, you see, we were just absolute opposites.

Teiser: That's interesting because her house looked to be in complete chaos, especially the back room.

Cravath: Well, the back room, yes. I'm sure she didn't even think of that. But, yes, it did look chaotic, but her drawers would be orderly. This always seemed interesting for an artist to see. I never could understand why she didn't want it to look more attractive on the surface. Well, she'd have a beautiful little arrangement of flowers.
Flowers always.

But she was able to remove the other part from her sight and just enjoy the perfection, and I think that ties in with her way of thinking. [Interruption]

One thing, though, was that I remember Dorothy always dressed so attractively, and neatly.

Yes, always. She'd get up in the morning and before breakfast she'd be dressed so that she could go any place with a neat skirt, shirtwaist, blouse, or something. She never was sloppy, never.

But, I mean, you could tell she was an artist by the way she dressed, which was her own way, I thought. Is that right?

Yes, I think so.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

Excuse me for making this comment on the tape, but I was reminded of Kitrie on the tape that I listened to.

The dog.

The dog. It was very obvious and almost made me homesick for Kitrie, even though I never was very fond of her, but hearing her bark on the tape--

The dog was devoted to Dorothy.

Oh, yes.

And before that she had a multitude of cats, did she not?

She had cats and she had also--

She also had a dog.

She had a dog before, the border collie.

Also a barker.
Cravath: Well, Dorothy was not a very good dog trainer, you know. I mean, she knew all about animals, but she spoiled animals.

Teiser: She also had a great big blackbird for years.

Cravath: Oh, yes! I'd forgotten about that bird, yes, and the cage. And the snake! Don't forget the snake! And, you know, the snake used to be inside the front door. [Laughter] Somehow or other I didn't think a snake was a very welcoming touch right inside the front door. Remember, it was on that table. I protested so every time I went over, I guess, that it got moved into the hall upstairs.

Teiser: You were mentioning, Catherine, her writing. She was art critic for--

Cravath: Well, she wrote for the California Arts and Architecture. She did the San Francisco reviews for a number of years.

Harroun: She said that writing never worried her, that she had no block at all in writing; it was very easy.

Cravath: She didn't have any compunction about it.

Harroun: No, it was very easy and she wrote very well. I discussed it with her because I found writing very difficult. She didn't at all, but she said that she had that block in painting, that sometimes she would do anything rather than paint.

Cravath: Yes. Well, it had to be perfection. Well, look at that painting [the self portrait]. It's interesting to contrast her painting of Muriel Branigan. Do you remember that one that looks very like an Italian Renaissance painting?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: To contrast that--and that was completely finished--with her large painting of her mother and Anne. Edie feels that both of those should go to the Oakland Museum.

Teiser: I remember that another medium that Dorothy was rather interested in was photography.

Cravath: Yes. She was a good photographer. She was an awfully good photographer.
Teiser: But I remember her saying that she felt about that somewhat the same as she did about writing, that you just look through this little machine and press something.

Cravath: Yes! [Laughter]

Teiser: It wasn't really connected with you any more than your writing through a typewriter; it was removed.

Cravath: [Laughter] Oh, that's interesting, yes.

Teiser: Was her friendship with John Collier significant in her artistic development?

Cravath: I think so. I can't say specifically. Of course, he was a demon photographer. You remember how he used to brush you aside? He photographed a few things for me and, of course, as a sculptor, I always had ideas about how it should be lighted and what the background should be, you know. I was hard on John. Well, he won out, you know. I was brushed aside when he photographed things for me. [Laughter]

Teiser: Did she get along well with him if he was that arbitrary?

Cravath: Oh, I'm sure, because I think he respected her. He probably didn't respect me. I always felt very inferior to Dorothy, but, well, I guess everybody was inferior to Dorothy. [Laughter]

Harroun: I wouldn't say that you were, but I think--

Cravath: Well, she was my best critic, anyway. I miss her terribly.

Harroun: I know that John Collier was working on a book and that she helped him a great deal and he never admitted it that she helped or that anybody helped him, but I know she did.

Cravath: Oh, I'm sure she did. Did Raymond, when you interviewed him, say how much he had learned from her?

Harroun: No, he didn't. He did say that you and Dorothy and Dorr had helped him when he was young, or something.

Cravath: Well, you know, it's very interesting. There's only one man who studied with me when I had quite a few classes (and he did quite a bit of work afterwards) and when he had an exhibition
Cravath: at the Legion of Honor he gave credit and said he'd studied with me. His name was Archie Garner. But I don't think Raymond ever did or Jacques Schnier ever did. It's interesting. I mean, men don't do it so generally, but this one man did it very openly and graciously and I remember it. He was a friend of Paul Forster's. But I wasn't surprised that Raymond didn't say anything about it. But he did his first sculpture in my class. I'm not surprised about John either, not accepting--I mean, men don't generally.

Teiser: Do you think Dorothy learned from Collier? He was and is, I guess still, a perceptive man.

Cravath: Yes. Oh, I think so. Yes. They were very good friends.

Harroun: She felt that she did, and he invited her to come down to Taos that summer and that's when she did the painting that I have.

Cravath: Oh, yes. Oh, it was at his invitation?

Harroun: His invitation, yes.

Cravath: I see. He was there that summer?

Harroun: He was there and he felt that she would, of course, get a great deal out of that area and the colors and so forth, which she did.

Cravath: Oh, yes. She did beautiful paintings.

Teiser: Did she do much painting there?

Cravath: Oh, yes, she did. Well, there's almost a bundle of these little paintings--oh, maybe fifteen or so--and this doorway that Edie selected for herself. She's fixed the frame and reframed it. Everything that she took home has been absolutely brought up to date as far as care is concerned. She varnished one painting.

Harroun: Wonderful.

Cravath: Oh, yes. She's magnificent at that. The other night when we were there Tom McNeil from Los Angeles, who is sort of a collector of Maynard Dixon's, was just so enthused over that doorway of Dorothy's, that painting.
Harroun: What painting is that?

Cravath: It's a little one. It's a doorway and you see out beyond the doorway. You've probably seen it. But I'm sure it belongs to the Taos period, you know, it's probably an adobe house. There are many of those. She must have done work just all the time that summer.

Teiser: Did she work any other places than in this area and there?

Cravath: Well, when she went camping in the Sierras, she'd make sketches and things, but she didn't do a great deal, I don't think, consistent work as much any place else as she did here.

Teiser: She didn't work when you and she were in Europe? She didn't sketch?

Cravath: No, no. She took lots of pictures. We both just looked and looked and neither of us sketched.

Teiser: We mentioned her writing. I guess in her last years when she wasn't well enough to be very active, she did more sewing and stitching.

Cravath: She did some beautiful stitchery, tapestry. She did a tapestry of the rooster. Do you remember that?

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: And that was from a cartoon that she had made for the mosaic for the St. Peter's church. It was beautiful craftsmanship. But my favorite of her stitchery was the pomegranate that she did, the hanging, you remember, in the living room. The other one. She'd made the magnificent cartoon, which I have here, and she did the actual mosaic, and somehow or other this was just a little repetitious. It's a beautiful thing, but that pomegranate was so fresh, so original. I just loved that. I guess Anne has that. She has both of them, I'm sure. She undoubtedly took them home.

Teiser: She did sew beautifully. I remember she made Catherine and me aprons, and she insisted that we come and try them on so she could fit them.

Cravath: Oh, yes. And knitting. She knit this green sweater. And she made the skirt that's the same color, the material, that goes with it.
Harroun: That's a beautiful sweater.

Cravath: Isn't that a lovely sweater: Yes, I love it.

Teiser: I remember she was saving Kitrie's hair and spinning it, and then she used it in something or other, didn't she?

Cravath: I think she did. I'm not sure what. Yes, she loved crafts and she loved gardening and she was a wonderful cook. Oh, my goodness! We mustn't neglect that field. Yes, she was a very, very good cook.

Well, speaking of my saying I felt inferior to her, you know, Dorothy and I were always just fascinated because she really had Edie where she belonged! I mean, Edie respected her! [Laughter] I wish Edie respected me a little bit the way she did her, but I'm not worthy of it; this I know. Imagine Edie sitting there freezing on the scaffold waiting for Dorothy to make up her mind!

Well, of course, cooking--I'm glad that Edie takes over when she comes here because I'm not a good cook. But she just goes to work and takes over. I don't have a chance to even produce a dish.

Teiser: I remember your speaking of Dorothy's perfectionism and about her wanting things to be right. I remember how long it took them to build the new kitchen.

Cravath: Oh, yes, the new kitchen, which was just right. That was worked out.

Teiser: Chick was working on that.

Cravath: But they never resolved the old kitchen, as you know. That was just a collection of--well, I guess since her death many, many loads have gone to the dump from there.

Teiser: Didn't Chick do some of the cabinet work? It was beautiful work.

Cravath: Oh yes, he did. I think he designed it probably. He was very meticulous too, you know. He was a perfect craftsman.
Cravath: I remember she used to be very amusing about Raymond when we were doing the Players' Club thing because she couldn't understand a man who wasn't a good craftsman, a carpenter, and Raymond wasn't a carpenter. He used to talk about beating the nails. [Laughter] That's what she said he did; he beat the nails. [Laughter] But Chick she respected absolutely as a craftsman.

Teiser: I think maybe you'd better say what Chick's professional career was.

Cravath: He was a physicist and he was a research fellow in his junior year and a Ph.D., Dr. Cravath. He wasn't addressed that way generally, but he was a physicist and for the last years--oh, for many years--he was with Shell Development Company. Yes, he was a brilliant physicist and did a lot of original work.

Harroun: And very modest.

Cravath: Oh, very modest, indeed.

Teiser: His humor was as individual as Dorothy's.

Cravath: Yes.

Teiser: What year did Chick die?

Cravath: 1962, which is what?--thirteen years ago. In September.

Teiser: And when did Dorothy first become somewhat disabled?

Cravath: Well, it was quite gradual. I mean, even after I was working on St. Francis at Candlestick Park, I have snapshots of Dorothy out there with me, you know, giving me criticism after the statue was up, which was '71 or '70, and she was driving the car and coming to the city. I mean, she was somewhat limited in her strength. I remember when I went to Mexico in '69 she said she wouldn't have the energy for a trip. Her vitality was lessened, but she was getting around and doing. She was functioning.
Teiser: But even when she wasn't well, she always seemed to have something she was working on.

Cravath: Yes, she did, as you say, the stitchery and knitting. She loved to knit. She made these costumes for herself; I mean the sweater and skirt. She'd get the color that matched, the yarn, and I remember she had a red one and she made a number of them. Of course, I cherish this very much. [Referring to green sweater.] And she did a lot of sewing for Anne, of course.

Teiser: And I think we mentioned that she had carved hands for a figure.

Cravath: Oh, yes, for Edith Hamlin. Yes, this was a madonna that Edith had. It had come from Mexico, Spanish Baroque, and the hands were broken off of it. It was original. It was a wood carving and the hands were gone and somebody had undertaken to restore it and made these very awkward hands, very awkward. So, Edie got Dorothy to make them. She made some hands in wax and then she carved them, just exquisite hands. I was looking at them the night before last at Edie's.*

Harroun: Just watching her work, the meticulous--

Cravath: Oh, her manual skill was just--well, I told you last time how she would take a glass of wine and do this [gesture of twirling glass]. Well, I've seen her do that for fifty years and never a drop went over and I was practically breathless because there was this great, great dexterity; I mean, just meticulous.

MURAL RESTORATION

Teiser: I think what we haven't [discussed], but I meant to bring up earlier, was the restoration work she did on her own murals in the Mama House.

Cravath: Right.

Teiser: That was a long project, was it not?

*See also p. 277.
Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: I'm not sure whether there were one or two periods of restoration. I think there were two.

Harroun: There were two.

Cravath: Yes, she restored those. And then the Coit Tower, you know, she restored the murals there. That was a big assignment. Oh, incidentally, Emmy Lou Packard has taken over now.

Teiser: Yes, that was a big assignment and, again, that took her into research on materials.

Cravath: Not very many people could do that, you know, that perfection with painting.

Teiser: As I remember, when she was working on those mosaics for the church facade, she was terribly interested in materials, and she'd gathered various kinds for them. Had she and Chick gathered pebbles too?

Cravath: Oh, yes. Well, that is an unusual mosaic because it is pebbles, it is Italian glass and Mexican glass, and it is broken dishes; I mean, anything that would suit. She bought a lot of Edith Heath seconds because she had some beautiful colors and beautiful glazes and these warm colors that she wanted for certain parts, and then she would break the dishes up. And she would use colored glass or beach glass, you know, that has been made milky. Yes, all of these things are in that mosaic. It's very, very rich and beautiful.

*Teiser: And I remember her going into how to get the right materials to use in restoring the Coit Tower murals.

Cravath: Yes. Well, Hank Rusk for years was the restorer at the de Young Museum and at the Legion--I mean, for both museums. He, incidentally, was in the same sculpture class I was when we were young, so I've known Hank for many years. We were in school together. Well, he was a good friend of Dorothy's and a great technical adviser for years. Of course, we'd always call Hank if we had a problem, but she really understood what she was doing, what she was finding out.

Teiser: And I believe you said Anne worked with her a little on the--

Cravath: Yes. Anne worked with her, I believe, in the Coit Tower and Anne has a lot of skill. She's very talented, very talented.

*See also pp. 175-176.
Teiser: Do I remember that both of those jobs of restoration had to be done on scaffolds?

Cravath: Well, not so much in the Coit Tower. Very little. Maybe some, but most of it was near the floor; I mean, or not high scaffold. But, of course, the Mother House thing was entirely scaffold because it's over the paneling.

"A MOST EXTRAORDINARY PERSON"

Teiser: Well, what else should one say about Dorothy?

Cravath: Well, we've said a great deal. I mean, she's a very unique and one of the best artists that San Francisco or California, I think, has ever had. As you know, I hope very much that there will be an exhibition of her drawings at the Oakland Museum. I've talked to the director, George Neubert, and he was interested and turned it over to Terry St. John. Terry St. John came out and looked at the drawings with Kai DuCasse and me and he was so impressed. I remember he compared her drawings favorably with Diego Rivera's and that was rather an enthusiastic remark, you know. So we are hoping that an exhibition of her drawings will be arranged in due time at the Oakland Museum. I mean, there is no rush because it should be properly done and I would like very much to have either a good catalogue or a book with reproductions of her drawings, perhaps a book with a little sketch of her life or something. So this is something we should work on.

Harroun: Yes, that would be wonderful.

Teiser: I think one thing that I'd like to be sure is on the tape is that Dorothy was hardly a simple-minded optimist, but that she always had a kind of cheer even when she was extremely ill.

Cravath: Always.

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: She had the most wonderful sense of humor. Always!

Teiser: I was not as close a friend as either of you--but when I talked with her, even in difficult times, she was never mournful.
Cravath: Never. And never gloomy, no. She was realistic. She was not very optimistic, really.

Harroun: No.

Cravath: But she had such a sense of proportion. Well, a sense of humor is partly a sense of proportion. She had one of the best senses of humor that I have ever known.

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: She was so entertaining.

Teiser: Well, she had an ability to look at things from an unusual point of view, and not everyone's point of view.

Cravath: Right, right.

Teiser: But still it was not a corrosive kind of humor.

Cravath: It wasn't sarcastic, no.

Teiser: She made fun of things and people.

Cravath: Oh, yes, but in a gentle way. [Laughter]

Harroun: Yes.

Teiser: And she made fun of people she liked as well as--

Cravath: Oh, yes. Oh, absolutely.

Teiser: I remember her description of your father playing the flute, for instance. [Laughter]

Cravath: [Laughter] Oh! Well, Dorothy, you know, had such a fine musical ear.

Teiser: Did she really?

Cravath: Oh, yes.

Harroun: Yes.

Cravath: Oh, she had a marvelous sense of music and musical ear, so she
Cravath:  would suffer when some of the rest of us wouldn' t, you see. I remember she several times said, well, it was all her fault; she got him started playing the flute again. It was a project.

Teiser:  He lived with Dorothy and Chick after--

Cravath:  Yes, from the time that he came out from Rock Island and all the years they were in Berkeley. Yes, he lived with them all those years. It was wonderful for him and it was nice for Anne and it was good.

Teiser:  Is there anything that should be added? It's difficult, isn't it?

Cravath:  Yes, it is difficult. I mean, there just aren't words to express what you feel about Dorothy. That's why I hope that we can work up a book, you see. Also, I was thinking of her paintings. The first thing, I think, is the museum show. That's what is more important to me.
Biography and Works

"FINDING OF MERCED RIVER"

POST OFFICE--MERCED, CALIFORNIA
DOROTHY WAGNER PUCCINELLI
AND
RAYMOND PUCCINELLI

Dorothy Puccinelli is one of San Francisco's most versatile women artists. She is not only a painter in oils, water color and tempera, but has done lithographing; is interested in sculpture; has designed stage settings, and interior decorating. In all these fields a certain boldness of execution and originality in design have made her work distinctive. In her work on public buildings she has made use of her highly developed decorative sense, using her space to the best advantage and leaving no holes in the walls she has covered.

Although Dorothy Wagner was born in San Antonio, Texas, December 19, 1901, she was brought to California when a little girl. Her family, who were engaged in the colorful occupation of flower growing, settled in Half Moon Bay, down the coast from San Francisco. There Dorothy attended High School and first became interested in a career of art. When she was eighteen she decided to attend the California School of Fine Arts, and continued her studies there for four years. It was there that she experimented with different types of art work and gained the knowledge of various media which she has used since.
FURTHER ART EDUCATION

Wishing to extend and to diversify her art education, Dorothy enrolled in the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design in San Francisco in 1925. Here for two years she specialized in the effect of prismatic color, design, and the laws of aesthetics. She studied the reaction of the human eye to color and light, and balance in form, line, and color, with relation to space.

At the Seventh Annual Exhibit of the San Francisco Society of Women Artists, held in 1932, Dorothy Pucinelli won the first prize of $100.00. Her exhibit, which attracted very favorable attention, was a design for a fresco. The subject she selected was a hardy laborer, treated somewhat after the Mexican mural school.

Joseph Danysh, critic on the San Francisco "Argonaut", writing in that magazine, September 22, 1933, had the following to say of her one man show at the Palace of the Legion of Honor:

"Her present exhibit shows a tendency towards a kind of stylization which, while it happily places elements of design before technical or reproductive values, her symbols are not yet sufficiently her own to carry full conviction. Her approach to the natural world is a vigorous one, eschewing still life and delicately feminine abstractions for strongly modeled heads, and the more virile animal and bird motifs."
WORK ON GOVERNMENT FRESCOS

Dorothy Puccinelli was one of the pioneers in the Federal Art Program created by President Roosevelt's administration. She first became associated with the Public Works Art Project, the first of the governmental art programs under the Civil Works Administration, in 1933, and to her and Helen Forbes was assigned the task of decorating the Mothers' House at Fleishacker's Zoo in San Francisco. Together they designed a set of murals to go above the paneling on the four walls. These were to illustrate the story of Noah and his Ark. The animals concerned in the story made the subject a happy selection for the building in the Zoo, and one which would please the adults even as it fascinated the children. The Puccinelli mural represents the building of the Ark, and the story was told with simplicity and restraint. The laboring men are working under the shadows of threatening storm clouds which presage the deluge.

Glen Wessels, writing in the Argonaut of June 22, 1934, described the work, briefly, as follows:

"Helen Forbes and Dorothy Wagner Puccinelli are in the finishing throes of their two frescos in the Mother House at the Fleishacker Zoo. From their present effect these works appear to be among the most successful resulting from the Public Works Art Project activities in the San Francisco region.

"The North wall is decorated above the line of the doors with a large representation of the building of the Ark, the South wall with the landing of this same vessel. The treatment is entirely in harmony with the modified
Spanish interior in both color and design. The style may be said to follow that of the Fra Angelico, but is rather more luminous and high-key in key. The drawing is simple and effective. In each case the rhythms of the design are centered on the structure of the Ark which occupies the middle of the panel. In the "Building of the Ark," figures of men are placed right and left of the vessel, in the "Landing of the Ark," groups of water birds form similar masses.

It was feared that after the government funds covering C. W. A. were used up that this work would have to be left uncompleted. Fortunately however, under the W. P. A., more money was allocated to this Art Project and Dorothy Puccinelli and Helen Forbes have been able to complete this interesting and decorative piece of work. They are at present engaged on the task, and when finished it will be a monument to the happy co-operation of the Federal Government with the artistic talent of the community.

The U. S. Treasury Department has a program of decorating various post-offices and other federal buildings with murals. They have held extensive competitions for this work and Mrs. Puccinelli and Helen Forbes won that held for the post-office at Merced, California. They selected for their design historical events connected with the founding and discovery of Merced. It was the choice of this subject matter as well as the excellence of the drawing that won the competition for the two artists. This work has not yet been started, but will be done after the project at the Mothers' House is completed.
RAYMOND PUCCINELLI

As with several of San Francisco's artist families, Raymond Puccinelli is an artist as well as his talented wife. In his case there is the interesting fact that it was not until after his marriage with Dorothy Wagner that Puccinelli developed his interest in art. He is one of San Francisco's most promising young sculptors and while his work has not yet attained much recognition, his steady improvement and development speak well for his future in his chosen field.

Writing in the San Francisco News of February 26, 1936, Junius Cravens, the art critic, had the following to say of Raymond Puccinelli's exhibit:

"Though Puccinelli is one of the youngest of the local sculptors, his work has developed and matured notably during the last two years. Today no trace of the amateur remains in what he creates.

"Puccinelli's favorite medium appears to be unglazed terra cotta and he has an unusually sensitive feeling for its peculiar texture. But he also works capably in wood, stone, and other sculptural media.

"A great many of Puccinelli's pieces are portrait heads or busts, a subject which he handles remarkably well. His recent work, being neither modernistic nor academic, might best be described as being individualistic."

Raymond Puccinelli is at present studying at the Art Institute in New York. He is undoubtedly one of the coming sculptors, and richly merits the interest and encouragement being given him during his formative period.
DOROTHY WAGNER PUCCINELLI

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

CHALK DRAWING:

Study for Fresco

MURALS:

Animals
Noah's Ark
Moraga and the Naming of Merced River

OILS:

Beth
Camel
Camel's Head
Rose Gatherers

PASTELS:

Chinese Head
Portrait
Portrait

TEMPERAS:

Bolivian Child
Girl with Cross
Winifred

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

Mrs. Leon Liebes, San Francisco, California
Chinese Head
Girl with Cross

Sam Bell Wakefield III, San Francisco, California
Beth
Portrait

David D. Bohannon, Hillsboro, California
Animals
PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

San Francisco, California:
San Francisco Museum of Art
San Francisco Art Association Collection
Bolivian Child (tempera)
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Portrait (pastel)
Mothers' House, Fleishhacker Zoo
Noah's Ark (tempera mural)
Palace Hotel
Rose Gatherers (oil)
Merced, California:
Post Office
Morange and the Naming of Merced River (mural)

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California:
San Francisco Museum of Art
San Francisco Art Association, 55th Annual, 1935
Self Portrait
San Francisco Art Association, 55th Annual, 1936
Winifred (tempera)
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
San Francisco Society of Women Artists, 1932
Study for a Fresco (chalk drawing)
One-man Show, 1933
Art Center
Joint Exhibition with Raymond Puccinelli, 1933
Los Angeles, California:
Foundation of Western Art, 1935
Head of Negro Girl
Bothwell and Cooke
One-man Show, 1936

AWARDS:

San Francisco Society of Women Artists
7th Annual Exhibition, 1932
First Prize, $100, for "Study for a Fresco"

CLUBS:

Member:
San Francisco Art Association
San Francisco Art Center
San Francisco Society of Mural Painters
San Francisco Society of Women Artists
Foundation of Western Art, Los Angeles
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RAYMOND PUCCINELLI

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

TERRA COTTA:

Portrait of Kenneth Spencer
Portrait of Bianca Bruni
Portrait Head of a Woman
Maria
Veronica Pataky

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California
San Francisco Museum of Art, 1935
Maria
Art Center, 730 Montgomery Street
Bay Region Sculptors Show, 1932
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Puccinelli, 1933
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One-man Show, 1936

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